UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
B 000 019 486 0

No. 148

LIBRARY

OF THE

Union

SABBATH SCHOOL,

No member of the School is to be allowed to have out more than one Book at once, nor to retain any Book more than two weeks in succession.

Readers are requested to be careful in using this book, and punctual in returning it. To injure a library book, or to retain it longer than is right, is to do an injury to others which cannot be easily repaired.

Union - Pp

~~21~~

105

THE

CHRISTIAN MECHANIC.

A

SKETCH OF CHARLES MORSE,

OF NEWBURYPORT, MASS.

WRITTEN FOR THE MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY, AND APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE OF PUBLICATION.

BOSTON:

MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY,

DEPOSITORY, No. 13 CORNHILL.

SK

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the year 1853,

BY THE MASSACHUSETTS SABBATH SCHOOL SOCIETY,

in the Clerk's Office of the District Court of Massachusetts.

Well-Spring Press, No. 4 Spring Lane.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER.		PAGE.
I.	EARLY LIFE	5
II.	HIS MOTHER	14
III.	THE DARK CLOUD	33
IV.	DOMESTIC RELATIONS	42
V.	UNION WITH THE CHURCH	93
VI.	A SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER	108
VII.	ONE OF HIS SABBATH SCHOOL SCHOLARS HIS PASTOR	121
VIII.	MR. MORSE AS A PARISHIONER	150
IX.	INTELLECT CULTIVATED FOR GOD	162
X.	FAITHFUL IN FRIENDSHIP	171
XI.	INTEREST IN PUBLIC MORALITY	184
XII.	RELIGION IN DAILY LIFE	189
XIII.	MISSIONARY SPIRIT	204
XIV.	LIFE OF PRAYER	214
XV.	LAST DAYS	225

THE

CHRISTIAN MECHANIC.

CHAPTER I.

EARLY LIFE.

In presenting to the public eye the life of this humble and devoted Christian, the writer is not influenced by any variety of incidents, or any peculiarity of circumstances, which might invite description. It is the record of a very simple, retired life, apparently like thousands of others, except as its interior purpose shaped and colored it.

His pastor, in a sermon preached to his people, on the Sabbath after the death of Mr. Morse, remarked: "Human character is so subtle in its nature, so difficult to be understood, and if understood, often inexpedient to describe, that I seldom speak to you publicly of individuals, even when I know that a light has gone out, leaving many sorrowful hearts darkened by the stroke. But, in this instance, has a life departed, so transparent and so consistent, so full of the purposes of duty, so ripe in those Christian fruits whereby we are told we 'can know of the doctrine' professed, that I can but follow it from its source to its final entrance into the vast sea of immortal life. The stream was clear, reflecting the image of heaven above, and enriching and blessing the earth through which it flowed."

Charles Morse was born in Newburyport, Mass., August 8th, 1803. His parents were Mr. William and Mrs. Elizabeth Morse; and he was the fourth child in a family of eleven children, ten of whom lived to mature age. It is rather a remarkable circumstance, that the commencement of his mother's married life, was also the commencement of her religious life, her attention having been arrested by the prayer offered at the marriage ceremony. That occasion, which is suggestive often of merriment to the thoughtless, or of conventional parade, was that on which hinged the momentous decision of her destiny. God, who had especial designs in her onward path, led her thus to that self-consecration which is the first step towards the guidance of others. Her husband made a profession of religion later in

life; and both were respected members of Rev. Dr. Dimmick's church, at the time of their decease.

From early childhood, Charles manifested a docile, affectionate disposition. The wish of his parents seemed to be his law. In his sports and in his work, he showed much natural energy, and a strong will, but it was not suffered to interfere with wholesome subjection. He has been heard to express gratitude for the obedience inculcated in his childhood. When he could not always see the reason for a command, he was taught to obey it; and this habit both exercises and strengthens the whole character. The obedience of the child, is a preparation for the faith of the Christian. It is "the first commandment with promise;" and the blessing of God follows its observance. "I thought," he

said, "that my parents could not bid me do a wrong action."

A large family circle develops the character of each of its members, for the tastes and interest of others must be consulted, and this brings into play the peculiar traits of each. Selfishness cannot easily remain latent, where there are constant occasions to call it out. The family is the world in miniature, with its hopes and fears, its successes and disappointments, its rights and wrongs. As a boy, Charles Morse was the kind and affectionate brother, as well as the dutiful son. He entered into the arrangements of the others, with great forgetfulness of self, and was anxious to do more, and not less, than his share of any required duties in the family. If any pleasure reached one of his brothers or sisters, it was reflected in his

ready smile of sympathy, and he was constantly thinking of something for the comfort of his home. While he enjoyed the society of other lads of his age, he returned to his seat at home with evident satisfaction.

As a pupil at the public school, those who knew him there, speak of him as "a good boy," "never getting into quarrels, and very attentive to the rules of the school-room." He was diligent in study going to it with relish, and not as to a task. He would have been delighted to pursue his studies farther, but he knew that the circumstances of his family would not permit it, and he would not suffer himself to repine, when compelled to relinquish school for active labor.

He was rather quiet in his manners as a school-boy, and avoided that rough class of boys who delight in rude and

cruel sports, or indulge in vulgar and profane language. His sensitive spirit could find no fellowship with such, although he formed a very strong attachment to a few chosen companions. These early associates were always dear to him.

When he was about seventeen years of age, he was apprenticed to his father, to learn the trade of a ship-carpenter, and remained with him for four years. During this time, he labored hard and faithfully, ever ready to regard the wishes of his father, and, as far as he was able, relieve him amid the exposure and toil attending that kind of work.

Thus nearly twenty-one years of his life passed. He was looking forward, as it is natural for the young, to many years of unclouded pleasure. Although he was amiable in disposition, and had no inclination for the low amusements

which consume the time and means of many of his age, still, he had not yet given himself to Christ. As he afterwards expressed it, he "was making preparations only for this world."

It is not to be supposed, that during this period he was without any reflection in his immortal destiny. This was hardly possible, living as he did under the influence of a prayerful mother, and listening to the Word of Life, dispensed by the now venerable Dr. Dana. He was exemplary as a moral young man, punctual in his attendance on the Sabbath school, and in the choir, of which he was a member; but the Holy Spirit had not yet been the guest of his soul. And without the Divine influence to seal instruction, how many hear it to wonder, and perhaps admire, and yet remain aliens from God, and His love.

But a cloud was rising in the horizon of that youth, although as yet, unseen by him, and behind that cloud, dark and gloomy as it appeared, there was light, mercy, salvation. The Lord had need of him, but he was to be disciplined and prepared for service.

CHAPTER II.

HIS MOTHER.

"For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition, which I asked of him; Therefore, also, I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he liveth he shall be lent to the Lord."

1 SAMUEL, 1: 27, 28.

IT would be very pleasant to trace the influence of a Christian mother on the character and life of her child. But its extent, its result, can never be fully comprehended here, since they are as endless as that life itself. The religious experience of Charles Morse was too intimately connected with his mother's prayers and untiring efforts, for us to separate them. It is evident that she

was the "Household Angel," living in constant intercourse with Heaven, and through her fervent pleadings, bringing down blessings from above. Hers was that frame of mind which the apostle enjoins when he bids us to "pray without ceasing;" hers the prayer which Montgomery describes as

"The soul's sincere desire,
Uttered or unexpressed;
The motion of a hidden fire
That trembles in the breast.
Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near."

A peculiar affection and sympathy united this mother and son. They had many traits in common; and the implicit trust of the child strengthened into the confidence of maturer years,

when her character was fully understood.

That which the devout soul craves first, and most of all for a loved friend, is God's choicest gift—eternal life. He has higher aspirations for him than are known to eager ambition. Mrs. Morse labored unweariedly for the salvation of her son. It was her custom to set apart days of fasting and prayer in his behalf; and on such occasions she poured forth her supplications with an importunity that could not be denied. She not only prayed for him, but it might be truly said that she "watched unto prayer," noticing every providence which might seem to have any bearing on his spiritual welfare; and when the days of his trial came, she had a strong feeling that the deep affliction was designed by a merciful God to

lead him heavenward, and she was not disappointed.

She was unwearied in her care for her household, but in rendering to her son every earthly aid, she did not forget his higher nature, or the fact that his undying soul needed that light, without which no one can "see God." Most tenderly did she soothe his sorrows, and strive to bring to him help higher than hers. It was at this time a circumstance occurred, which was afterwards related by Mr. Morse to a friend. "I used," said he, "to notice, while I was confined to my room, that my mother was in the habit of frequently stealing over the stairs, which led to a little attic chamber, and tarrying there for a long time. These visits would also be made after all the household were in bed; and often, if I awoke

early, could I hear her stepping very softly over those stairs; then there would be a low murmur, as if some one was speaking in a hushed but earnest manner; once or twice I heard a sob, as if there was weeping. I knew not what to make of it. Does she go there, thought I, to weep over my misfortunes? Or does she (I hardly dared think of this,) go away into that chamber to pray for my soul? I was soon convinced that the latter was the case, and that I was the object of her agonizing supplications. But oh! how the thought distressed me! I felt that a praying mother like mine was bringing down on me a weight of responsibility which I could not bear. I shrank from the thought, but it haunted me continually. Go where I would, that little attic chamber, and that mother's pleading

voice was ever before me." "How did you rid yourself of this trouble?" asked his friend. "By going there to pray for myself," was the reply.

At another time he said, "My mother did not make a practice of preaching long sermons to us, on the importance of coming to Christ. If she had done so, I think it would have had a tendency to harden my heart; but she set before us the beauties of religion by a holy, consistent, Christian deportment. We could not help knowing that she lived near to Jesus, and that her whole heart and soul were devoted to His service. She was always saying some little words for Him. And, oh! *those precious little words*, how they told upon my mind, and how deeply are they still fixed in my memory."

Speaking one day of the importance

of cultivating perfect truthfulness, he said: "This was one of the beauties of my mother's character, and I think her example in this respect has ever had a great influence over me."

To another friend he said, "That dear, praying mother, how often have I seen her coming out of her room, with a countenance which almost seemed to shine, looking as I could imagine Moses looked when he came down from the Mount of Communion. While I have sometimes gazed on that peaceful face, I have inwardly blessed God for such a treasure."

Those who were intimately acquainted with Mrs. Morse knew how solicitous she was for the conversion of her son. She hardly ever received a call from any Christian friend, to whom she could speak freely, without disclosing, in the

course of the conversation, her ruling desire. "I want my Charles to be a Christian; will you remember him in your prayers?" On being told at one time that a certain individual, who was not then particularly acquainted with him, had been led to make him a special subject of prayer, she appeared almost overwhelmed, and exclaimed — "Oh, I will be faithless no longer;— united prayer *will* be answered."

When he began to express a trembling hope that he had found the Saviour, then her desires expanded still farther. "I want him," she said, "to be a consistent Christian, to walk very near to God, to honor his Master in all he does." In this connection, she observed to a friend, "I am almost afraid to move, lest I should do something to cause in my son a low estimate of Christian

duty. I want him to set his standard high, and to be a *whole* Christian." Those who knew Mr. Morse most intimately, can best testify how remarkably these desires were answered.

When we speak of her feelings in respect to this son, we would not imply any indifference to the immortal interests of other members of her family; for never was a mother more scrupulously attentive to the temporal and spiritual welfare of all those who were committed to her care.

A friend called on her one day, and found her with a countenance exceedingly distressed and anxious. On inquiring into the cause of her sorrow, Mrs. Morse replied, "How can I feel that I have done my whole duty as a Christian, while I see one of my children remaining out of the kingdom of Christ? I think

there must be something very defective in my prayers, or unholy in my daily walk, which prevents their salvation. How terrible is the thought, that I — their mother—should, in any way, be a stumbling block, over which they may fall and perish!"

An intimate neighbor, on entering her house one day, found her standing amidst her work, in the attitude of prayer, her eyes closed, and her hands clasped tightly, as if in very agony of spirit. On being spoken to she very modestly said, "Although my hands are full of labor, yet a prayer-hearing God is ever nigh, and we can at any time cry out, as Abraham did, 'Oh, that Ishmael may live before thee.'"

This fervent petition was, doubtless, in behalf of a daughter, in whose heart the Holy Spirit had been striving, and for

whom this faithful mother had felt the most intense anxiety.

Said one who was in the habit of seeing her frequently, indeed, almost daily, "I cannot now remember that I ever passed half an hour with her without hearing her say something which related to Christ, or the interests of his kingdom. Once, when about leaving the house after a pleasant interview, she laid her hand affectionately on my shoulder, and with her peculiar, gentle smile, said, "Well, we have spoken freely of earthly things, shall we not also, as Christian disciples, have a word to say of Him who suffered for our redemption?

> 'We, alas, forget too often,
> What a Friend we have above.'"

Mrs. Morse possessed a mind of uncommon refinement, and it seemed ever

to be in harmony with all the works of the Creator. Notwithstanding her many in-door duties, she snatched time to cultivate flowers, and her little garden afforded her great pleasure. "These flowers," she would say, "are truly living preachers; they have to me a sweet voice, continually speaking of God's goodness and love, in thus adorning a world which would seem to be dark without them." The writer well recollects a morning offering she made her, from a favorite rose-bush. "I give them to you," she said, "because they are so beautiful, but we must not worship the rose, but the God who has power to create such beautiful things." Would that all to whose taste flowers minister, might also read their message, and feel with Horace Smith:

"Your voiceless lips, oh, flowers! are living preachers;—
Each cup a pulpit, and each leaf a book,
Supplying to my fancy numerous teachers
From loneliest nook."

"I do love flowers," said Mrs. Morse, one morning, to a friend, who found her bending over a little plant she had been watering, "and when I think of the great variety there is among them, of the many different forms and colors, and remember that they, too, like us, must fade and die, I cannot help feeling a kind of joy in knowing that there will be never-fading flowers in heaven." It was thus with all the objects in nature which she saw; her mind immediately turned to their beauty and harmony of design, and glanced "from nature up to nature's God."

Mrs. Morse enjoyed the social privi-

leges of a Christian, and it was her delight to open her doors to those who met to pray. There are those who can look back with the most cherished recollections to those precious seasons in that neat and quiet parlor, which had been so sacredly dedicated to the service of God. "It always seems easy to pray in Mrs. Morse's parlor," said one, "for the very atmosphere of the room seems holy."

It was certainly a consecrated spot, and to this day it is felt that the benefits which many are now enjoying in spiritual things, are in answer to the earnest supplications which rose like incense from that room.

Many of that precious praying band have now gone home, and she who so cheerfully welcomed them to her earthly dwelling, is among the number. Their

prayers are turned to everlasting praises. On whom shall their mantle fall?

It would be natural for us to conclude that the closing scenes of such a life would be full of triumph, that such a sun would set without a cloud. But it was not so. Mrs. Morse, for the last few years of her life, became, in consequence of a severe illness, subject to an almost entire loss of memory; during the last year she did not know even her own children.

After the death of her husband, in 1847, she removed to Topsfield, where she made her home with a married daughter. About a year before she died, she made her last visit to Newburyport. Although she was apparently in usual health, (except perhaps that her face was more pale than formerly,) and mild and lady-like in all her movements,

yet it could be clearly perceived that her power of memory was wholly gone. She was taken by a friend to the house where she had spent so many years — where she had seen some of her children come into the kingdom of Christ —from which she had seen the husband of her youth carried to his long home — and around which so many sacred associations clustered; but it was all strange to her. She was then led into that parlor — that precious, holy spot. "Do you remember this place?" her friend inquired. "I think not," she replied, "I believe that I was never here before." "Did you ever know of a Mrs. Morse who used to come here to pray for her children?" "I do not remember any such person," was her reply. "Well," continued her friend, "did you ever hear of Jesus

Christ, our Saviour?" "Jesus Christ," she repeated, with a sweet smile; "oh, yes, I think I remember Him—He died for sinners, did He not?"

This precious name, "sweet to the believer's ear," and dearer to her than any earthly tie, this name could not be forgotten. Soon after this last visit, a heavier stroke still fell upon her, and her reason was entirely dethroned. She soon, however, passed away, and was at rest.

The following obituary notice, written, it is supposed, by some member of a praying circle in Topsfield, appeared in the paper soon after her decease:

"In Topsfield, Aug. 28th, Mrs. ELIZABETH, widow of Mr. William Morse, of Newburyport, aged 77.

"We retain a most delightful recollection of our departed sister. Her sweetness of character, her highly cultivated mind, her gentle and grace-

ful deportment, rendered her a model well worthy of imitation; and I am sure that not one of our circle would be longer lamented than she will be. Her truthful and conscientious spirit gained her the confidence of all who knew her, and her lovely and noble qualities of mind and heart won their affection. In the arduous duties that devolved upon her, she was habitually cheerful, while upon all around she exerted an influence, gentle, yet beneficent as the distilling dew.

"As a wife and mother, her tender affection and fidelity were never surpassed. It was in her family that her retiring and attracting virtues shone with their own peculiar lustre. Her views of religious truth were clear, distinctive, and scriptural; and superadded to a natural conscientiousness, was her high sense of personal responsibility. This was the controlling motive-power of her life—a power maintained and strengthened by her daily habit of studying the oracles of Divine Truth, and of communion with God in prayer.

"However manifold and arduous might be her duties, or distracting her cares, she did not forget where to look for guidance and support; and long in the memory of her children will linger her image, as she sat by the window, perusing together the book of Nature and the book of God. Priceless is the value of such a

habit, clearing away the clouds which earthliness gathers around the spirit, and through the purified atmosphere, giving the soul sweet visions of the heavenly land. It was this perpetual intercourse with the invisible world which brought to our friend strength from above, and gave consistency and spirituality to her character, and invested her with a peculiar charm."

CHAPTER III.

THE DARK CLOUD.

"Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust Him for His grace:
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face."—COWPER.

WHEN Mr. Morse was within three weeks of being twenty-one years of age, he was at work one day at his usual occupation, when, on attempting to drive a nail, it broke, and a piece of it struck his eye, effectually destroying the sight, and prostrating him on a bed of great suffering and agony. He was confined to the house for many weary months, and most of the time to a darkened room; and

his constitution, never very strong, became at that time so injured that it never fully recovered. His nervous system received a severe shock, and in consequence, he ever after was a sufferer from dyspepsia, and its attendant evils.

When sufficiently recovered to go abroad once more, he was changed from the ruddy, vigorous youth, to the pale, attenuated, feeble man. This event made him always look prematurely old. Possessing naturally great sensibility, with unusual refinement and delicacy, he felt very keenly the change in his appearance, and it is not strange that when he looked forward to his future life, his heart should sink within him. He had arrived at that period of life when the imagination of the young man paints the future in glowing hues, and fills it with busy plans, when the present is

but the bridge over which he longs to pass to reach the independence to come. He, too, had formed his plans, marked out his onward path, and supposed that his "mountain stood strong." But God, by His providence, spoke to this young man, "crossed all his fair designs, blasted his pleasant grounds, and laid him low."

None but those who have been placed in a similar situation, can conceive of the emotions which agitated him. Nor were they those of mere personal suffering, or selfish disappointment. His father was advanced in life, with a large family around him needing his aid, and no doubt expecting that a son, so active and affectionate, would be to him a strong support on which he could lean —the staff of his old age. But there he was in that darkened room, his physical frame racked by intense agony,

and his mind suffering still more acutely. This afflicted young man could not see through the dark mystery which overwhelmed him, and he began to have gloomy views respecting the justice of God. How many are there who have been through the same temptation. We receive constant and continued mercies, but we heed them not, yet when trials come, the natural heart rises in rebellion.

To a person of his peculiar sensibility, the disappointment was most keen ; and he shrank from the thought of mingling again with his former associates in his altered state. His was not yet the peace of reconciliation, he could not yet feel that in God's purposes

> "The bud may have a bitter taste,
> But sweet will be the flower."

Had not his heavenly Father revealed to

him his love, planting new hope in the soul, he would in all probability have become a prey to morbid sensibility, and shunned all society. But God had other designs, and by this discipline of suffering, was fitting him to become, what he so eminently was in subsequent life, the friend of the suffering, and a son of consolation to all in trial.

In the darkened chamber of this suffering youth, was one faithful attendant, ever near, ever ready to minister to his wants, and, as far as possible, to alleviate his distress. Similar as they were in natural character, the mother well read the anguish of her son, even in his silence, and met it with the deepest sympathy. At the time of the accident, which had caused him the loss of his eye, she cried: "Oh, if I could purchase back that eye, by parting with

one of mine, how gladly would I do it." But her sorrow was not without hope. This praying mother believed that God designed by this affliction to save the soul of her child, and most eagerly did she watch every opportunity to say some of those "precious little words" which were so fondly remembered in after years. But her duty did not end here. In the deep stillness of the slumbering household, there, in that little chamber up yonder, that same mother is prostrate before the mercy-seat. She is in earnest; she knows that a covenant God is ever faithful to his promises. He hath said, "Ask, and ye shall receive,"—and so she pleads: "Lord, send down the influence of thy Spirit upon this afflicted child, that he may in this time of darkness and suffering, turn to Thee.

Bind him to thy service, and seal him as wholly thine."

"The effectual, fervent prayer of the righteous man availeth much." It was during the time of his confinement at home, that Mr. Morse began to feel the strivings of the Holy Spirit. They were heard like "the still, small voice." The work of introspection and self-knowledge began, and he saw himself as a lost and ruined sinner, condemned forever to sin and the consequences of sin, unless rescued by the sovereign atonement. His convictions of sin were very deep and pungent, and there were seasons when he was almost driven to despair. So strong were these feelings that at one time, he dissolved his connection with the choir, considering himself unworthy even to join in "the

service of song in the house of the Lord."

When his health was restored, and he once more went abroad, and engaegd in his former occupation, he continued to feel the heavy load of sin bearing him down. He stood as a condemned criminal, listening to the thunders of Sinai without once daring to lift his eye to Calvary.

This state of mind continued for two or three years, and when at last, hope began to dawn, it was not as the sudden effulgence of the noonday sun, but like the first faint ray in the eastern horizon, slowly increasing, until we may call it light. He was accustomed to say that he could point to no definite period when the first ray of light entered his bosom, piercing the deep darkness which had so long brooded there; but gradu-

ally he became sensible of its existence, and the effect of light was peace, such a peace as he well knew "the world could not give or take away."

Thus we see that dark cloud lifted, and we are permitted to behold its "silver lining." We are constrained to acknowledge God as infinitely merciful, even when he hedges up our path, and crosses every earthly plan. Mr. Morse used to say that "the loss of his eye was the means of saving his soul."

CHAPTER IV.

DOMESTIC RELATIONS.

"Love is the golden chain that binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven, who finds
His bosom glow with love."

THE dutiful spirit which we have seen in the early life of Mr. Morse, was ripened by grace into that thoughtful and generous affection which made him the centre of his family, and of all who were brought into any social relations with him. He never suffered one of the links of love to break, or grow rusty. No matter how scattered the different

members of his family might be, or how many new ties might spring up around them, he still kept them distinct in his interest, and ministered constantly to their happiness. Had any one of them a sorrow—he, too, felt with them, and hastened to pour the balm of Christian consolation on their wounds. Had any one a want—he endeavored, if possible, to relieve it. Although his own pecuniary means were always quite limited, he was generously prompt in sharing his money with them. But far more valuable still, he gave them counsel and sympathy—and his relatives and friends all felt that he was to be relied on as most disinterested and true at all times. His presence and his letters were ever welcome to them all.

When Mr. Morse had a home of his own, at some little distance from his

mother's dwelling, if his form was seen crossing her threshold, she would exclaim with joy, "Here comes my son Charles!"

In 1831, he was united in marriage with Miss Lucy D. Saunders, a member of the First Presbyterian Church, Newburyport. He had peculiarly exalted ideas of the family relation, founded as it is by Him who "taketh the solitary, and setteth him in families," and hallowed by its origin, its uses, its eternal influence on character and destiny. It was not his aim solely to bring comfort and affection to the hearth-stone, careful as he was to do that, but to make it the scene of constant improvement. He was as attentive to the nourishment of the mind as to the provisions of the table, and always shared at home his reading and subjects of thought. It is a

rare thing to find a man, especially one engaged constantly in manual, hard labor for his support, who makes it his daily habit to read aloud from some author of excellence, comparing and studying the truths conveyed, thus turning his hours at home into fruitful opportunities of mental and moral progress. This was a constant practice with Mr. Morse, even when it was difficult to tell how his necessary labor at his trade, and his unvaried charities could have left him the time for it.

That he did every thing to make his home happy, no one ever doubted; and his wife once remarked in conversation, "I never imagined that any person could be so utterly unselfish as Mr. Morse; the longer I knew him, the more I felt how different he was from most people in this respect."

For a few years, a little daughter blessed this home, but she was early transplanted to the home above. Her sweetness of disposition and winning ways, entwined her very closely around her father's heart, and, as is so natural to a parent, his hopes reached forward into the future, promising himself increasing comfort from her love and companionship. He was accustomed, even before she could speak, to take her with him as he went to his noontime season of devotion, and she enjoyed it highly. Her mother once asked him if she did not disturb him, and he replied: "Never, she remains perfectly still, with her little hands in mine, and never manifests any appearance of weariness." So fond was she of sharing with her father, this noontime hour of prayer, that she never needed any other check

for any little misdemeanor, than to tell her if she was not obedient she could not go into the room with father. Young as she was, she had formed a little prayer for herself, and would be found kneeling, and in her childlike manner, asking for a new heart. A day came when the tiny form could no longer kneel by him, and his heart bled at the thought that nevermore on earth could it be. This bud was one culled by the reaper, Death, who

"Gazed at the flowers with tearful eyes,
He kissed their drooping leaves;
It was for the Lord of Paradise
He bound them in his sheaves."

Thus this little one became a precious memory in that home,—a sweet hope, too, for she had only "gone before."

The fondness which existed between

Mr. Morse and all children, was quite remarkable, especially so when it is remembered he was not mirthful and loquacious, but rather grave and pensive in his manners. He was a special favorite among the children of the families whom he was accustomed to visit, the youngest often manifesting the strongest attachment. Children are said to be great discerners of character; and they read the tenderness with which he entered into their wishes, and the pleasure it gave him to serve them.

There was one family, who, for some years, resided under the same roof with himself, and in all of whom he felt a deep interest. To one twin sister of this band, a fair, blue-eyed, delicate child, he was exceedingly attached, even in her infancy, from a real or supposed resemblance to his own lost darling.

Their mutual delight in each other, it was very pleasant to witness. Earlier than one would have supposed possible, she would watch for his approaching footsteps, and catch the well-known tones of his voice. She was never happier than when with him, and she spent much of her time in his dwelling. She would watch the hour for his return, and if she could see him coming home, would run to meet him, satisfied if she could put her little hand in his and walk home with him. He never considered her an interruption, even of his busy and carefully husbanded hours, but he was fertile in inventing methods to amuse and gratify her. During his illness, little Flora was often with him, and manifested the deepest sympathy for him in his affliction. Many an hour did she spend by his bed-side, and by

her childish prattle and affectionate expressions, while away his pain. On these occasions, when about to leave him, she would give him a parting kiss, and ask with a beaming face, "Have n't I taken good care of you?" It is believed she will never forget that kind friend, who used to take her on his knee, and talk so sweetly of heaven, where God and the good angels dwell, and of Jesus and his love for the little ones, and His words of invitation, "Suffer little children to come unto me."

We give a few letters which remain, of the many which Mr. Morse wrote to the scattered members of his family. The mechanical exertion of writing was very tedious and painful to him, and generally caused a severe nervous headache. But his affection for his friends was ever so thoughtful of what would

gratify them, that the inconvenience to himself did not prevent him from exchanging expressions of kindness and Christian counsel with them. For this reason are they added, not for literary interest, but because they show his warm heart, and the permeating influence of his piety:

"*January* 10*th*, '46.

"My dear Mother:—

"I was truly glad to hear from you by Mr. D., and though you did not say any thing in regard to your health, I concluded that you were in the enjoyment of usual health, and contented and happy; that is, comparatively so, for you and I have long ago learned, that positive and permanent happiness is not to be found on this soil, where 'thorns and briars grow,' and, as our pathway

lies through a land abounding with them, how can we expect but we shall be often torn?

"Dear mother, I often think of you, and long to see you again, and it is very trying to me, that you are so far from us and your acquaintances here, and that we can see you so seldom. I know too, that you must feel the loss of your meetings with your Christian friends; but, dear mother, you are still as near the Fountain of all happiness, all hope, all consolation as ever, and I hope in spirit still more so; and all the sorrows and changes you have experienced, are working out for you 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'

"There is still much left to you, my mother; many mercies still remain to you in this world, and what is above

and beyond all, 'a good hope through grace,' that when 'your earthly tabernacle shall be dissolved, you have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.'

"I send with this, two numbers of the 'Missionary Herald,' and one 'Home Missionary.' If you desire it, I will send them every month by mail.

"Yours,

"CHARLES."

"DEAR MOTHER:—

"I long to see you, and hope to enjoy a visit from you soon; but in the mean time, I hope that we shall all, by the rich mercy of our God, be kept in peace. May you ever receive constant supplies of grace, and faith, and hope, love and patience to cheer and comfort you in your declining years,

and fit you more and more for that happy land where are no sad changes, and no sorrow, because no sin. There, my mother, all is holiness, and peace and joy. I am sheathing a vessel, and oh, how it reminds me of father; but I trust that he is resting from his labor.

"Miss E., a member of your church, met with a severe accident a fortnight since, on her way to an evening lecture, and she will be obliged to lie still for thirty days or more. Thus is she laid aside. Surely we may say,

'Dangers stand thick through all the ground.'

"When C. writes again, please, dear mother, send some word of maternal love.

"Your affectionate son,

"CHARLES."

"DEAR MOTHER:—

"In dating this letter eighteen hundred and fifty, I am reminded of the rapid flight of time, and my thoughts revert to the years and scenes of my childhood and youth. Some of the recollections of life's early morning are very vivid and pleasant, while others are painful. Some of the first and longest to be remembered, are of my mother—of her love, her affectionate care and solicitude, both for my temporal and spiritual welfare, her patience with the waywardness of her son Charles, and his brothers and sisters, who, in the folly and vanity of childhood and youth, often gave her occasion for grief and tears.

"Again, my thoughts return to the present time, and how changed is the

scene! The family scattered, father removed to 'that bourn from whence no traveler returns,' (and I trust 'it is well with him,') and you, dear mother, separated from most of your children, and very far from some of them; and I sometimes fear that you may imagine that amid the busy cares and employments of life, they may have forgotten you. Let me assure you that it is not so. I wish that I could see you to tell you so; but you well know how it affects me to write at all, and I am now nerving myself up, in order to give you some account of the revival of religion which we are all now enjoying."

After giving a minute account of the progress of the good work around him, Mr. Morse continues to write: "These were indeed melting seasons, and just

such, dear mother, as you would have enjoyed. Oh, how often did I wish that J., and S., and W., could have been here; it seems to me they would have come at once to a decision, and have given their hearts to the Saviour.

* * * * * * *

"My dear mother, I think of you continually, and anxiously hope that you are comfortable. It is a source of great consolation to me, that your *best portion* is not in this world of sin and woe, but that you can by grace say to the worlding,

'Your heaps of glittering dust are yours,
But my Redeemer's mine.'

"Your affectionate son,

"CHARLES."

"P. S.—I received a letter from sister H., about four weeks since, by Rev.

Mr. Stearns, who exchanged with Dr. Cleaveland. She is well established, and happy in her Christian hope. Can it be that sister H. is a Christian? I fully believe it; better evidence for the time being I could not expect or desire. Mother, you did not go up into that little attic chamber, in S—— street, to pray for your children in vain."

EXTRACT.

"DEAR MOTHER:—

"I know that you are longing to hear from me, and have often said to yourself and others, 'Why don't Charles write, as he said he would?' So I did, mother; but it must be in my own way and time, for I need not remind *you* how much it costs me to write, and how much it affects my poor head

and nerves. A dread of this has alone prevented. But now my affection for you must overcome every other consideration, and under its influence I seize my pen to express that affection, and my remembrance of you continually while you are absent from us.

"Dear mother, I shall never forget your pious and faithful instructions, to my latest breath; and since father died, (do you continue to feel his death as keenly as ever?) you are scarcely ever absent from my mind. Oh, how happy and relieved I felt, when I found, by a letter from C——, that you are now boarding with S——, and that C—— was in the same house with you. Tell J—— and S—— that they have my warmest thanks, and my affectionate remembrance.

"Mother, I trust you are enjoying the

comfort which a hope, a *good hope*, of a better world can give you, for you have found, and we all find, that

'This life's a dream, an empty show.'

Now, I suppose you will commence, and repeat the whole psalm from which this is taken.

"We have now a line of telegraph, extending to Boston. Professor Morse, the inventor, is a descendant of our ancient family, at the head of Market street. So says the Newburyport Herald.

"Your affectionate son,

"CHARLES."

The sister H—— mentioned in one of these letters, was the youngest child of the family, who, after the death of her father, went to Providence, and was there awakened to new spiritual life,

and soon after united with the church there, under the pastoral care of Rev. Dr. Cleaveland. Three years afterwards she went to Springfield, Ill., to make her home with her brother, who was an active and engaged Christian, and very useful in that part of the country. Here the hand of disease was laid upon her, and she died a few months after her arrival. The following letters show how deeply Mr. Morse made the afflictions of his kindred his own:

"DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—

"We have received your letter of Sept. 18, informing us of the loss of your dear little boy. Very truly did you say that 'Charles and Lucy could sympathize with you, for none can truly understand the pangs and agonies of a bereaved heart, but those who have gone

through the same trial themselves.' We understand your feelings, yet how little can sympathizing friends do toward removing, or even alleviating, each other's woes. There is one Friend, and only one, who is able, and not only so, but ready and willing to help.

'Here bring your wounded hearts, here tell your anguish,
Earth has no sorrows which Heaven cannot heal.'

"You feel that 'God has a right to reclaim his own.' Dear C——, once you could not have said this, your heart would have violently rebelled. And why this change of feeling? Is it not by the grace of God? Then, 'Oh, to grace, how much a debtor,' not only that when we pour out our sorrows and tears into His gracious bosom He hears us, and gives us needed strength to

bear the heavy load, but has He not also promised heaven at last to His weary ones, if they make a sanctified use of the crosses and afflictions He lays upon them?"

June 12.

"I rejoice still to learn of your trust in God. To Him I commend you continually. He only can console and comfort you, and do for you and us 'far more than we can ask or think.' Strive still to confide in Him, and in those dark hours which you experience, say, 'Lead me to the Rock which is higher than I.' I always remember you in prayer to our heavenly Father, who alone can relieve effectually, or give you grace, and patience, and strength 'to suffer all His righteous will,' and enable you to endure unto the end.

"I bless God that He does so much for you, by giving you a good degree of trust in Him, and He has promised more grace, even, for 'as thy day is, so shall thy strength be.'

* * * * * * *

"My dear C——, do strive to remember that it is your Father's hand which inflicts the rod, and He does it, not willingly, but for your profit; and I do think your profiting has appeared by your patience, submission, and trust, and, I believe, by your increased spirituality. Be assured that your Saviour and Redeemer is constantly watching the process of the trials He is calling you to endure; watching, too, with deep interest, and most tender sympathy, for 'He is touched with the feelings of our infirmity.' May you feel Him ever near.

"Mother was here about a month

since. Poor, dear mother, she has forgotten almost every thing but her God and Saviour. And what, dear C——, are all things else compared with these? I trust that these are the true riches which you can call your own.

* * * * * * *

"It is seldom you are absent from my thoughts, and *never* from my petitions; and I trust that I am remembered in yours, for *I value greatly the prayers of the children of God while they are under affliction, for I believe that they are precious in the sight of the Lord.* I hope you have the light of His countenance, and experience some, at least, of the joy of His salvation; but this, in its perfection, is found alone in heaven. Let us, then, with patience wait for it. Heaven—shall *I* ever enter there?"

"*Newburyport, Sept.* 12, 1854.

"DEAR BROTHER AND SISTER:—

"You have probably heard ere this of the death of our dear mother. You were aware of the feeble state of her health, and of the sad condition of her mind, and through brother L—— you learned the particulars of her last sickness, and were not, I suppose, much surprised or unprepared when the sad tidings reached you that she was gone. Yet we must ever deeply feel her loss, for she was a good mother, and loved her children wisely and tenderly.

"In them, memory now wakes to the many instances of her Christian love and fidelity, to her anxious cares for their best good, her pious counsels, her constant, earnest prayers for their salvation, her patience with them in the

obstinacy of their youth, and, indeed, in the whole of her consistent Christian life. 'Her memory, indeed, is blessed.' 'Her children rise up and call her so.' How can we, then, but mourn her loss, or rather, *our* loss? Yet we cannot, must not, mourn as those without hope, for we have as much assurance as we can have, that death to her is infinite gain.

"Let us bless God that He continued her to us so long, and, that, though in her later days, her mind and memory were so weakened as to make it painful and distressing to us to witness, yet spiritual and eternal things still remained, and clung fast to memory. I will mention one instance of this. When she was here last fall, though she knew me at times, she would soon forget where she was, or who we were. I was speak-

ing to her of father; she said, 'Did you know him?' I told her that I was his child, and hers also. 'Oh,' said she, 'I have forgotten almost every thing, but I do not forget my Saviour, and I hope I shall never forget to pray.' Nor did she forget, for though God, in His mysterious providence, visited her with distressing insanity in her last sickness, yet near and at its close, He gave intervals of reason, when the soul would rise to God in prayer—the God she loved and served so faithfully — the Saviour on whose atoning blood she relied alone for pardon, acceptance, and eternal salvation.

"And now, she is gone! Our dear mother is *at rest!* Her spirit is released from infirmity, suffering, and sin; and with all its powers invigorated, drinking in joys, of which we can form no con-

ception. How comforting and consoling is this assurance to us! Does it not take away the sting of death, and forbid our sorrowing as those do who have no comfortable grounds of hope for their departed friends?

"I hope, dear sister, that we shall always remember, in earnest, persevering prayer, those of our friends who are still out of the Ark of Safety, and that the providence of God, in removing this beloved mother, may awaken us all more and more to the realities of the eternal future.

"I had a conversation with mother, when she visited us in July, in relation to her Christian hope. It was in the evening, and for more than an hour she conversed rationally and feelingly; and though some of the time she was unconscious who we were, yet her answers

to the questions of Lucy and myself were exceedingly satisfactory, just such as we could have desired. To the question, 'Do you not think that, as you have professed Christ, and honored Him in your life, trained up your children as faithfully as you have, and been in some degree useful in the world, it will avail something towards your salvation?' she replied, with great earnestness, 'Oh, no, no; do you? My only hope is in Christ—precious, precious Saviour!' Afterwards, while speaking of herself as 'a great sinner,' she was asked, 'On what, then, do you hope for salvation?' She answered by repeating the verse,

'There is a fountain filled with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners, plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.'

"Oh, it would have done you good, dear sister, to have heard her. The recollection of that scene is very gratifying and comforting to us now. I held this conversation with her, to ascertain how far, when every thing else was forgotten, religious truth had its hold on her mind; and surely it must have convinced any skeptic that religion was *a divine reality.*

"Mother passed away from earth on Wednesday, August 30th, at 10 o'clock, after much suffering, both bodily and mental; but it is all over now. No more sin, no more darkness or pain, no more weeping, no more death. Yes, sainted mother, thou art

'Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wakes to weep.'

"And now, dear sister H., and father

and mother have had a happy meeting, to part no more forever.

"Your brother,

"CHARLES."

"DEAR SISTER C.:—

"Your letter, written in March, was received last week, and, with deep regret, we learn that you have been sick and afflicted. I have long feared this, by what has been written, from time to time, and have been kept in a state of painful solicitude. How does my heart bleed for you, dear C. Truly, you are the ones who have 'seen affliction,' but let us not add, with impatience and ingratitude, by the 'rod of his wrath.'

"I rejoice to learn that you do not feel inclined to say so, but thank God for it, for *once* you would have rebelled. Now you find what comfort and support

faith in Christ can give, both in want, sickness, or distress of any kind.

"While reading the account of your sufferings, I could not help weeping for you; but when you wrote that 'your husband was resigned to the will of God, and not only so, but that he was, at times, happy and longing to depart, and be with Christ,' I could and did rejoice, more than if you had found gold; yea, more than if you had in possession all the good things of this perishing world, for what would all this avail the soul, if it had no better or higher portion?

"And you, too, dear sister, can say, I am resigned to the will of Him who has said, 'I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee!' Oh, my dear C., the process by which you have both been brought to this state of submission and resignation to the Divine Will, has been pecu-

liarly painful. How many years of painful suffering did you endure before you left home, and even since, you have but doubled your sorrows. At the West you experienced sickness, misfortune, bereavement, and now—but *it is all right.* It is just the way in which you must be brought to trust in God.

Afflictions are the only blessings which God has promised without our asking for them. Still, they *are* afflictions, and we feel for you, and continually remember you at a throne of Grace, for they are at present, 'not joyous, but grievous;' but being sanctified they will work out for you 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.'

"You do, I trust, go unceasingly to Him who alone can help you. Look constantly to the great physician of body and soul, to 'the Rock that is higher

than you,' to the only sure refuge, the brother born for adversity, the Almighty Saviour, the Infinite Redeemer, the faithful God. Here, and here only, is strength and consolation to be found. Pardon also and peace; yea, life everlasting in that blessed world where there is no sin, consequently no suffering, and where the inhabitants shall no more say, 'I am sick,' where all is holiness and joy, infinite, eternal. Oh, dear Catharine, how rich the grace that makes us wretched sinners partakers of such glorious hopes!

"Yours in love,

"CHARLES MORSE."

"MY DEAR SISTER:—

"I fear that some of my letters may not reach you, and I have felt some anxiety about them, as it would be such

a loss to you, (that is, the money,) for I am conscious that the written contents cannot be of much value, though I do not think you would lightly estimate my attempts to comfort you, and, as far as may be, to alleviate your sufferings. But I feel my own impotency, dear C., to remove, or, very essentially, to mitigate your sorrows. Nothing but Omnipotence can effect this, and I do rejoice that you know and feel it a privilege to leave yourself in His hands, who doeth all things well.

"Although our heavenly Father does not promise to remove afflictions always, even when we pour out our petitions before him, yet He *has* promised to make 'His grace sufficient for us.' I believe that you are in a good and increasing degree, realizing this, and by the feeling and experience expressed in your letters,

bearing testimony to the faithfulness of your God.

"You do feel, sometimes, when you go to the mercy-seat, a degree of light and quiet trust in Him; and then there is peace, and you are disposed to hope that you are his child, and that He regards you with favor. But, ah, you say, 'these feelings are transient, and clouds return, and all is dark and dreary; faith staggers, corrupt nature rises, complains and rebels.' I suppose that at such seasons you discover more of the hidden evils of your heart, and are ready to write bitter things against yourself, and despondingly, if not despairingly, say, 'I cannot be a child of God.' But I believe that if the compassionate Saviour regards His followers with more love and favor at one time than another, it is when the soul, pressed down with a

sense of its guilt and unworthiness, and its utter inability to do any thing of itself, stretches out the hand, amid the darkness and gloom, and cries, 'Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief.' It is then that the Saviour, full of all mercy, is watching with infinite interest and favor, the soul, which is by this process to be sanctified, and made meet for the inheritance of the saints in light.

"Such scenes as this are like those of Bunyan's Pilgrim in his conflict with Apollyon, in the Valley of Humiliation. But he conquered, and so will every Christian, and be made even more than conquerors, 'through Him who loved us.' If Christians are to be sanctified, this is the way; and affliction is the lot of all Christ's followers, for it is written, 'These are they which have come out of great tribulation, and washed their

robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.' Again, we find, 'In this world ye shall have tribulation.' 'By grace are we saved,' and by grace we must live. You, dear sister, have, I trust, tasted this grace, and what could you now do without it?

"You might have been called to suffer all you now endure without the helping hand of a covenant God. Do you ever think of this? Can you not then sing or say,

'Oh, to grace, how great a debtor?'

"Grace is increased by sanctified affliction, because in seasons of severe affliction the soul has no refuge but in God; it finds no adequate support but in the Omnipotent Arm.

"I do think, my dear sister, that your profit has appeared during your protracted trials, and there is evidence that

you have made some spiritual attainments in the divine life. Remember, I do not say this to flatter you, for it would be an unkind and wicked thing so to do, but I say it to encourage and comfort you. You are constantly remembered by me at the throne of grace, and I trust that you will there remember us; will you not? Let us be mutual helpers to each other heavenward.

'When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And I sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.
When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be thy supply;
The flame shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume and the gold to refine.'

"I do long to see you, and I indulge in the hope that *somehow*, in God's

kind providence, circumstances may be favorable, so that I may visit you. But, in the meanwhile, let us continually pray for each other to our blessed Saviour, who is a brother born for adversity.

"The state of business here, as you probably know, is distressing, and so, indeed, it is throughout the country. God help the poor, or they must suffer. But I hope there are better times coming. Times! times! It is eternity which should occupy our anxious thoughts.

"Your affectionate brother,

"CHARLES."

"MY DEAR SISTER C.:—

"From necessity, I have delayed answering your letter, and now what shall I say to console or strengthen you?

You need something more than it is in my power to impart. I feel that your condition is one of no ordinary trial. A long, protracted season of sickness and suffering, away from the help and sympathy of friends, must and will, at times, wring from the agonized heart, the cry, 'Why, oh why is it thus?' But, dear, suffering sister, this is not the cry of faith, but of poor, weak, suffering human nature. It is God's own hand which is laying on this rod, Catharine, and none other; will you try to remember this when you are ready to say, 'This evil is of the Lord, why should I wait for Him any longer?' Remember, I say, that despair will not help you, will not remove one evil, but rather increase it.

"You will say, 'I know all this, but

it avails me nothing.' Well, then, dear sister, look to Jesus; He knows all your sufferings, and is watching, with all the interest of infinite love, the effect of your trials and temptations, and He will, if you endure faithfully, cause them to work out for you 'a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.' You know who it is that 'sits as a refiner' over the furnace where he has placed His richest treasures, and when He can discover his own image written there, He will bring them forth and use them for His own honor and glory. May God give you grace and patience to suffer a *little* longer, and then, how sweet will heaven be!

"I am aware of the truth of your remark, that 'it is easy for those who do not suffer to preach patience;' and

so conscious am I of my own weakness that I fear I should faint in the day of adversity; but I can assure you, my dear sister, that I am not without trials myself, and indeed, who is? I should like to suggest some words of comfort to you, if I could, and you know that I do not end by saying, 'Be ye warned, &c.'

"In your letters you have quoted largely from David's complaints, to express your own sorrows, and they are very appropriate; but does he not also say, 'Why art thou cast down, oh my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? *Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him.*' And *you*, dear sister, will yet praise Him; if not in this world, you will in a better, where you will again meet your departed ones, and where you will see and understand the

wisdom and love of all God's dealings with you here. What you know not *now* you *will* know hereafter.

'God is His own Interpreter,
And he will make it plain.'

"Truly yours,

"CHARLES.

"Enclosed is ten dollars."

"*Newburyport, Aug.* 8.

"DEAR BROTHER JAMES:—

"How earthly flowers do fade! You, my brother, have witnessed the sad and painful truth of this in your own case. The most valuable and choicest flower in your domestic enclosure is 'cut down and withered,' even while you were rejoicing that another precious bud had been added to your number. How was I surprised to learn

that your Sarah was no more. It was so sudden, so unexpected, that I cannot, even yet, realize it.

"To you, my dear brother, it must have been a heavy blow, and I try to sympathize with you in this sudden bereavement. Your loss, I know, must be deep, painful, distressing, for she was your companion in life, ever by your side, your *other self*. Now you know the *full meaning* of that word, *alone!* She was your counselor, your tried friend, the sharer of your sorrows and joys, and a helper in your every burden. You walked hand in hand with her, along the pathway of life, helpers of each other in the Christian course. She was the mother of your little ones, too, their instructor and guide in the way of truth and duty. *All this*, and more than all this, is in one moment

torn from you, and in view of this, I do not wonder that you cry out, 'my heart is desolate.' How gladly would I suggest some topics of consolation in this, your hour of deep affliction, but I feel incapable of doing it, for *your heart alone* knows its own bitterness. I said, alone. No, brother, there is One other who knows full well all your trial, all your sorrow. *He knows*, for his own hand inflicted the painful blow. He feels, for His heart is made of tenderness and love, and 'He does not willingly afflict the children of men.' 'As a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them,' even whom He chides, if they fear Him.

"Think of the mercies attending the sickness and death of your dear one. You had the privilege of doing for her all that could be done. You were not

at that time absent from home, but were with her to converse and pray with her, and hear her express such peace and joy in the near view of death. You have comfortable assurance that, as a Christian believer, she has now gone to be forever with the Lord. These are mercies you should not overlook, and do not allow the tears of grief so to dim your eyes that you cannot see the mercies and comforts which still remain. Remember the throne of grace, where,

'Our sorrows and our tears we pour,
Into the bosom of our God;
He hears us in the mournful hour,
And helps us bear the heavy load.'

"Oh, my brother James, may this affliction be sanctified to you, for it is *sanctified* affliction only that will profit;

and may we learn by this providence that we do *all* fade as a leaf, and be quickened to diligence and fidelity in the performance of duty, patiently suffering all the righteous will of our heavenly Father unto the end.

"I will conclude by committing you to the care of Him who careth for us all.

"Your brother,

"CHARLES."

EXTRACT FROM A LETTER TO HIS BROTHER JAMES.

"Your remark as to the state of the churches among you, may, with truth, be applied to the churches in this region. Still, there are some few conversions among us recently, which encourage God's children still to pray, and

labor, and hope for greater things than these.

"I am glad to learn that your Sabbath school is in an encouraging and prosperous condition. I hope you will be instrumental of much good in that part of the Lord's vineyard, but there must be devotion to the cause in order to be successful. I am sorry to say there is nothing particularly interesting in our school, but we '*labor in hope.*'

"Business here, at present, is very dull, but it has been very good the past year. Four hundred dollars with you in Illinois is better than eight here; at least, I think so. But I obtain a comfortable living, and keep free from debt, and have no disposition to complain; yet I should like something more, if it was the will of Providence, that

I might be able to give more to those who are needy.

"And so, brother James, I must relinquish the hope of seeing you again very soon, judging by what I gather from your letter; but do write oftener, won't you? Do you remember your visit here? Does not your heart cling with tenacity to the fond associations connected with that visit? Was it not sweet and pleasant to us? I can never forget it; those were some of the happiest moments of my life, and my heart is now rising and swelling while I think of them. But they have passed away —father has passed away—our friends, many of them, have passed away, and *we* stand among the 'fallen and falling,' and soon *we* also shall be gone, and oh, may it be to that

'Happy land, far, far away,
Where saints in glory stand,
Bright, bright as day.'

"And now, my dear brother, I commend you to God, with *all* that is yours, trusting that we shall yet again see each other's face in the flesh; but if not, *the will of God* be done.

"Your affectionate brother,

"CHARLES."

CHAPTER V.

UNION WITH THE CHURCH.

In June, 1830, Mr. Morse united with the First Presbyterian Church, of Newburyport, then under the pastoral care of Rev. Dr. Proudfit. This step was not taken without reflection and prayer, and even long struggle, for the gradual unfolding of God's purpose in his soul was so quiet, so characterized by deep humility, that he hesitated whether, indeed, he bore "the Spirit's seal." When, at length, the trembling Christian took his stand, when he put on the armor which was waiting for him, he made

an entire consecration of himself to his Maker's service.

From the hour in which he united himself to the visible church, he gained strength and cheerfulness, and his course was evidently onward and upward. He had laid *all* on the altar of God, and the one controlling question of his life henceforth was, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He did not recoil from duty, however arduous; he did not ask, is it pleasant or convenient, or try to shape it to his plans. The simple question settled, "Is it my duty?" he went forward, doing his best to perform it. This sanctified determination of character led him where many a good man might have halted, and kept him to a purpose from which many might have desisted, in discouragement. He was wont to say, "By the grace

of God, what any man can do, I can do."

The views of Mr. Morse in regard to the central doctrines of the gospel were very clear and decided. From the first dawning of spiritual light, he was accustomed to go to the Word of God with all his difficulties, never admitting a doctrine because it was currently received, or found in his own denomination, but requiring for its sanction, "Thus saith the Lord." When this was evident, it was enough, and no matter how mysterious, or how much assailed it might be, he stood firm and immovable. His assent was not easily won and lightly held, but a matter of slow formation, the result of earnest, prolonged and prayerful investigation, and once formed, he clung to it. His regard for evangelical truth was no mechanical adher-

ence to a *system*, but a reverent loyalty to the truth God had revealed—truth as precious as it was vital. Some one remarked of him, "He was of such material as martyrs were made of, and he would have gone to the stake in defense of truth, if duty had called him to it."

One of the most marked characteristics of his belief, was a conviction of the utter sinfulness of the human heart. So deep and pungent had been the testimony of his own consciousness in regard to depravity, so clearly did he see it painted in the sacred Scriptures, as inherent in man, that he spoke of it always in the most strong and direct terms, as a terrible fact, terrible in its nature and in its consequence. He turned then to the atonement of Jesus Christ, as the sovereign remedy, the

Almighty rescue for man; and with melting gratitude, he made it the foundation of his own hope, and the plea on which he rested all his appeals to others. While the other doctrines of revealed religion were dear and sacred, having their place in his mind, they were all clustered around this great central one of the atonement.

His union with the church of Christ was not to Mr. Morse merely an individual act of obedience to Him who has bidden such remembrance, but it was a *fraternal* act. Like one who has enlarged his family connexions, he had new ties, and the children of the same communion became especially dear to him. He interested himself in the public and private prosperity of the church. Yet his interest was very different from that mere business participation in duty.

which makes itself felt principally in every new arrangement or external fact of the church, and comes in with a bustling air of dictation, sure to be offended if not implicitly followed. Whatever was best for all, was best in the view of this brother. He labored in his quiet but most faithful way, to promote mutual growth and progress. He was prompt in kind counsel, and his counsel was as judicious and delicate as it was kind, prompt in sympathy, and in all friendly offices. If any member suffered in body or mind, among the first to visit him, to feel for him, and, as far as might be, act for him, was this brother in Christ. In all this he was not clanish. No! he was only true to his covenant obligations.

The following letter, written after twenty-five years of service had proved

the union of his practice and theory of faithful discipleship, was addressed by him to a young friend who had just united himself to the church of Christ.

"*Newburyport, July* 18, 1855.

"My Dear Nephew :—

"I have just received the joyful intelligence that God, in His rich grace, has given His Spirit to convince you of the infinitely important truth that you were a lost sinner, and that Jesus Christ died to save you, and that you have made a public profession of repentance towards God, and faith in the Saviour, and have determined to devote your life to His service.

I wish, if it is so, to rejoice with you, and ascribe the glory to the riches of His distinguishing grace. And now, permit me, my dear young friend, to give

you a word of counsel and encouragement, for interest in your future welfare and influence as a professed disciple, prompts me to do it.

"You know that it is of the utmost importance to commence aright the duties of a Christian course. I hope that you have counted the cost, for your work is but just begun, and it is a work from which you must never recede — never look back. It is a constant, self-denying work, with crosses to endure, your own corrupt nature to contend with, opposition from the avowed enemies of religion, and, too often, hostility from its *professed* friends.

"Well may you ask, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' Oh, not one! God knows that of yourself you can do nothing; yet, if you are a Christian, He has called you to this work by His grace,

and that same Omnipotent grace is pledged for your support. 'Lo, I am with you always.'

"Trust then in Him, my dear young friend, and if faithful to your Master, to the souls around you, and to yourself, you will find that though the work He gives you to do be arduous, still it will be a delightful work.

"And, now, my dear Edward, as you go forth into the vineyard, by your Saviour's command, let me entreat you that whatever duty He calls you to perform, you will do it promptly, faithfully. Whenever you have occasion to speak to sinners around you, of His love and the great salvation, to warn them, to beseech them to be reconciled to God, or whenever called upon to take an active part in meetings of devotion, (this has been a great trial to some young Christ-

ians, the neglect of which has greatly retarded their progress, limited their usefulness, and prevented their future comfort and enjoyments,) or to discharge any duty from which you may be tempted to shrink, depend upon it, dear Edward, that you will find it more easy, more comfortable and pleasant not to hesitate, or confer with flesh and blood, not to parley with pride or self-ease, but to decide immediately to 'take up your cross,' 'looking to Jesus,' who has promised the aid of His Spirit to teach and strengthen you.

"But I trust that you will not be satisfied with acting from the mere conviction of duty alone; no, there is a higher, nobler, stronger motive of action, 'the love of Christ constraining you.' This love will not only enable you to do His will, but patiently to suffer it,

to bear reproach, and to endure persecution meekly for His sake.

"The Bible abounds in rich promises and instructions for you; make it then your counselor and guide, study it daily, constantly, for it is 'able to make you wise unto salvation.' And while there are so many conflicting views of religion, even among those who profess to take the Bible for their standard, this we *do know*, for Christ has declared, that, 'If any man will do His will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.'

"Edward, you may not have been accustomed to hear much of Orthodox preaching; I mean the great doctrines of depravity, man's utter ruin, the atonement, regeneration by God's Spirit, justification by faith, &c. But if you are a Christian you will desire to know more and more of these things, espe-

cially of this one, that Christ died for sinners, atoning for their sins by shedding His own blood; for does not the Bible, (both the Old and New Testaments,) declare that 'Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.' Read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah; read *all* the Bible; come to it with earnest prayer, and God will, by His Spirit, reveal to you all needful truth, and I trust make you wise to defend His truth, and to win the souls of those so dear to you to Him, to 'the truth as it is in Jesus.'

"I trust that you have found before this, that 'prayer is the Christian's vital breath.' All real Christians have proved that spiritual life cannot exist without it. I trust that you have a place of daily, secret resort, where you meet with your Saviour, and where you can

make a full confession of sin, seek the application of His precious blood, obtain the influences of the Holy Spirit to sanctify, quicken, comfort and strengthen you, and so prepare you for usefulness in the church, and in the world. God has promised 'all grace' to those who seek it, and more than this, He has promised to crown that grace with glory.

"I have written thus plainly in regard to what I believe to be gospel truths, and I think you will pardon me, for they are of vital importance. It is of infinite consequence what a man believes, as his belief will influence his practice, and the results will extend into the eternal future. Therefore study, 'search the Scriptures,' that you may be wise in its truths; seek by earnest prayer for the influence of the Holy Spirit to keep you, to sanctify you, and enable you

so to live that your example may recommend the religion you have professed. Let your motto be 'Onward and upward.' Who knows but what God has called you out of that family circle into His kingdom, that you may become the instrument, through Him, of leading them to Jesus, of pointing them to the Lamb of God? It is your duty so to live before them that this may be the case.

"I desire most earnestly to see you, for I have many things yet to say, which I cannot write. May I not hope that you will visit us soon? In the meantime I wish you would write me, and freely and fully express your views and feelings, for you have many Christian friends here, who feel a deep interest in you.

"And now, I commend you to God,

desiring that you may be 'kept by His mighty power, through faith unto salvation.'

"Your affectionate uncle,

"CHARLES MORSE."

CHAPTER VI.

A SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER.

"Feed my lambs."—JOHN 21 : 15.

THE religious training of the young was regarded by Mr. Morse as a most sacred obligation of the church. He felt that He who had signified his unwillingness that any one of these little ones should perish, required this work of love at the hands of his people. Christ had left this duty as a precious legacy, and who would disown it by neglect?

Every Christian, then, should have

some direct instrumentality in the cultivation and direction of the young. From the time he first professed himself a follower of Christ, until he was withdrawn from all earthly labor, Mr. Morse was in some way connected with the instruction in the Sabbath school. He regarded the institution as "the nursery for heaven," and he loved its service. He was not drawn to it by a cold sense of duty, nor did he labor in it mechanically, as if it were a necessary toil, but with genuine earnestness, because he loved the Saviour, and yearned to have the young around him made holy and happy by early consecration.

Such was his conviction of the importance of the mission of the Sabbath school teacher, and his intense desire for usefulness in it, that it became one of the most prominent aims of his life.

to qualify himself for it. By prayer, by study, by extreme watchfulness, did he strive to enrich the recitations with knowledge, to present truth clearly to the mind, and to direct it to the heart and conscience.

In an unusual degree, Mr. Morse sought to become acquainted with the individual character of his pupils. They were not considered as persons connected with a school exercise merely, but as those whom he must know and influence, and whose relation with himself, when once formed, would never be forgotten. He tried to secure the affection of his pupils, and he was always in the habit of visiting them in their own home, that he might learn more of their tastes and habits of thought, and more effectually secure the confidence and co-operation of their parents.

Each recitation was to him a subject of fresh interest. In preparing for it, his method was to study the given portion of Scripture, and draw from it all the instruction he could obtain. After meditating on this, and arranging it in his own mind, he sought the help of such notes, commentaries and illustrations, as were accessible to him. He used to say—

"For my part, I should prefer to form my own questions, but my experience has been that the lesson is better studied, and more thoroughly understood, by most classes, with the aid of a question book."

His strong desire to do good prevented him from passing over the lesson in a hackneyed manner. "I often wonder now," said one of his pupils, who became an educated man,

" when I remember the intelligence and information Mr. Morse used to bring to his class. I did not think much of it then, of course, but for a man whose time was spent in hard labor, it now seems to me quite remarkable." He endeavored, by every means in his power, to interest and instruct his pupils, but he did not forget that their spiritual progress was the great object in view. Hence, he was eminently direct and practical in his teaching, striving to make *each one* feel that *he* had a personal interest in the subject. He was not satisfied with the routine of the class, but he often detained one and another after the usual exercises, or sought other opportunities for conversation, that he might press home upon the conscience the importance of a renewed life.

If, on these private occasions, he found any signs of awakened sensibility, he renewed his efforts through the week, never wearying in his own exertions, and never wearying in his fervent petitions that the Holy Spirit would direct and bless those efforts.

In his discipline he was kind, but firm. It was interesting to see how the inattentive and discourteous manner of some lads, yielded to the magic of his mild yet decided spirit. He seemed to expect courtesy from them, and they learned to respect him too much to be willing to lower themselves in his esteem. He encouraged them to ask questions, and made them feel that he, in turn, was interested in what they had to say. Some teachers, who had unruly boys in their classes, would bring them to him, saying, "Mr. Morse, I can do nothing

with this boy, and you must take him; you will know just how to manage him."

One Sabbath morning there was brought to his class, a lad over whom no one had succeeded in gaining any control. Indeed, he had given so much trouble, that it was thought if Mr. Morse would not try him, it would be necessary to have him dismissed from the school. After Mr. Morse had studied his character for awhile, he said to him, one morning—

"You might be something; there is enough in you to make a good man yet. You are like a gem, surrounded with a rough, unsightly exterior, and it depends very much on your own will whether this gem shall ever shine, or be hidden forever in darkness."

And then with affectionate earnest-

ness, and that tenderness of manner so peculiar to himself, he so pointed out to him the importance of raising for himself a higher standard of conduct, that the lad was wholly subdued.

"Why," said he, "no one ever talked to me in this way before. I did not know that there was any thing good in me; I did not even think that I might be a better boy."

After this, there was no further trouble with the lad.

A superintendent once said to him, "I don't know how it is, Mr. Morse, but an influence is all the time going out from your class, which seems to pervade the whole school."

We have already alluded to one trait of character which is too little cultivated by Christians generally—we mean, a willingness to surrender individual

tastes and preferences for the good of the whole. Mr. Morse was very sensitive to a refinement and harmony of feeling in those around him, and very tenacious in his attachments, so that it was peculiarly agreeable to him to avoid all change; yet more than once he gave up an interesting class, who were very congenial to him, to take one less promising and more difficult. Such sacrifices of feeling are a rarer offering to God than even money or energy, and they show very significantly where the heart is.

One who has arrived at mature age, and who, when quite a young lad, was in his class at the Beck Street Chapel, recently remarked that he always thought that Mr. Morse was entirely different from any teacher he had ever had before. "He not only wanted to make his pupils good,

but he tried also to make them happy. During the summer, he would often hire a boat, and take his class to sail, and thus try to secure their confidence and love."

"Oh," said another, who, during the winter of 1858 became a hopeful subject of renewing grace, "when I look back, and think of Mr. Morse's instructions, how earnestly he labored with me, how faithfully he warned me, how affectionately he entreated me to give my heart to the Saviour, I wonder how I could resist so long, and how much I regret that I did not at that season consecrate my all to the service of God."

During the same gracious visitation of the Divine Spirit, the heart of this faithful teacher was made glad by hearing that one, and another, and another,

who had once been his scholars, had united themselves to the people of God. It is believed that he never forgot one of those who had ever been connected with his class in the Sabbath school; but as they passed out from under his instructions, he kept up his knowledge of them, as far as he was able, followed them with his prayers, and with his sympathy in their adversity or their prosperity. He seemed to grasp, as it were, every soul who had ever been under his influence, and one who well knew, speaks of his constant remembrance in his devotions, of all his pupils, not only those at the time associated with him, but *all*, all who had ever listened to his voice.

He was a very successful teacher. His name, we trust, is written among those who have been honored as instru-

ments of "turning many to righteousness." Some who were benefited by his instructions had passed away to the higher home before him. Others are traveling in the upward path, who, it is believed, will yet be "stars in his crown of rejoicing." Two of his scholars became preachers; one is now a missionary on heathen ground, and others are filling offices of trust and usefulness, both in his native town and elsewhere. Said one who was not personally acquainted with him, but who knew the good influence he had exerted in the Sabbath school, "I think he was the best Christian man I ever heard of."

It is very pleasant now, even while he is sleeping in his grave, to hear the many testimonies given of his faithfulness and affection as a religious teacher.

May those who remember it as a privilege to have listened to him, deem it one to imitate him in his fidelity to the Sabbath school. Were it possible to collect all the names of those who had ever been placed under his care, from the time he first engaged in this service, until he laid it down to die, and if against those names could be recorded all the faithful admonitions, the earnest exhortations, the kind and affectionate entreaties which had flowed out from a heart longing for their salvation—and the result, either as lost or improved, could be given in legible characters—how full of interest would be the record!

Such a record has been kept, and in the great day of accounts, it will be opened and read before the assembled universe.

CHAPTER VII.

ONE OF HIS SABBATH SCHOOL SCHOLARS HIS PASTOR.

When Mr. Morse was a teacher in the Beck street Sabbath school, he was accosted one Sabbath morning by a lady, who was leading by the hand a delicate little boy, about eight years of age, whom she requested him to receive into his class. He consented, and taking the hand of his new scholar, he passed on.

Finding that the lad was timid and fearful of the new and untried duties before him, he endeavored, with his usual kindness of manner, to banish his

fears, and win his confidence, and he succeeded. Before the exercises of the school had closed, the boy, with the quick instinct of childhood, felt that he had found a new friend, and from that hour, he gave his teacher his warmest confidence and affection.

There was much to attract the two to each other, and sympathy of character overleaped the difference in age, and commenced a friendship never to end. They were both gentle, delicate in their feelings, and strong in their attachments, and they felt an affection for each other which time only strengthened. When, at the age of ten years, the pupil became personally interested in spiritual subjects, next to his parents, it was to his beloved teacher that he freely spoke of his new-found joys, his hopes, and fears. When twelve years old, John

Emerson felt it his duty to profess his faith in Christ, and it was his teacher who went with him to converse with his pastor; and in every important event of his future life, the same friend was his adviser and his counselor.

No parent could have watched with more solicitude his whole course, than did Mr. Morse study the unfolding of his mind, the shaping of his purposes, and the formation of his character. He took the greatest interest in his pleasures, his studies, his plans, and was always ready to give him that cordial sympathy which the young so much crave, and which is not only a delight to them, but a great blessing when it comes from a warm-hearted and judicious friend. Many a young person has been preserved from temptation, and fortified in virtue by the confidence he

received from, and felt in, an older friend. During his collegiate and theological course, a familiar and constant correspondence was maintained between Mr. Morse and his former pupil, who, when at home during the vacations, was always welcomed with heartfelt affection by him and his family.

Perhaps it may not be amiss to say, that in the story of "Millwood," the touching friendship between this devoted young Christian and his Sabbath school teacher, has been so truthfully portrayed by a sister of the former, that Mr. Morse has been repeatedly recognized as the original of "Mr. Mills," even through the thin guise of fiction thrown over it.

It is to be regretted that so few of Mr. Morse's letters to Mr. Emerson can be found, as they express, better than can any description, the deep interest

he took in his welfare. We give those which remain, without any opportunity for selection:

"MR. JOHN E. EMERSON, AMHERST.

"MY DEAR FRIEND:—

"I was gratified to receive a letter from you, after your arrival at Amherst; or, I should say *we*, for, as you may suppose, we are all interested in your welfare, and are truly glad to hear from you. I had rather receive two letters from you than write one, for though my affectionate regard for you should make it a pleasant privilege to communicate freely my thoughts and feelings, yet I must say it is one of the most difficult things in the world for me to write a letter. But I am indebted to you for writing to me, and I will

act on the principle of honesty, and 'owe you not any thing but love.'

"But, dear John, how are you? Not home-sick, or weather-sick, I trust, for soon after your arrival at Amherst, your letters manifested strong symptoms of both. Probably one occasioned the other; but time and change, I hope, have healed them. I had some anxiety in regard to the duties and responsibilities of your situation at Monson; your youth and inexperience, your being a stranger there, and the possibility of your having some pupils much older than yourself, and knowing, too, that you did not possess a superabundance of confidence and self-esteem, led me to fear that you would have many difficulties to overcome, before you could make yourself contented. I was truly glad to learn that you were getting along so well with your own

studies, and with your little urchins. I was glad, also, to learn that while there were some evils and inconveniences existing in your path, (and when, indeed, will there not be?) you were girding yourself for your work, by remembering that you are in the path of duty, and can therefore seek the blessing of your heavenly Father, whose promise to give strength, grace, and wisdom in every time of need, remaineth sure.

"I wish I could write you something new and cheering, in regard to the state of religion among us. You have doubtless heard how earnest and engaged Rev. Mr. Stearns is in his labors. He has strongly expressed his desires for a revival of *pure* religion among us. He has visited and preached in a number of towns adjacent, where God is pouring out his Spirit, and he has evidently

caught much of the sacred flame himself. Our meetings are well attended, in the old brick chapel, (where sometimes, no doubt, you imagine yourself to be,) and at times, Mr. Stearns appoints a meeting for inquiry. There have been as many as sixteen who attend as inquirers, but, alas, many of them appear to be willing so to remain. 'They know their duty, but they do it not.'

"I do really hope that we may soon witness a revival of that religion which is *pure* and *peaceable*, for there is much among us, at the present time, which assumes the name of Christianity, while it is wholly destitute of its power. It exerts no healthy influence on the every-day life of its possessor.

"Truly yours,

"CHARLES MORSE."

"DEAR FRIEND:—

"I have a leisure hour, and will attempt to improve the opportunity it affords to communicate to you a few thoughts, and an expression of my undiminished affection and esteem.

"If we may estimate the value of a thing, not according to its intrinsic worth, but by what it costs, why then, be so kind as to remember, dear friend John, that what I offer you in the way of letter-writing costs me something. No doubt the great difficulty is, I write so seldom, and while penning this line, the reflection strikes me suddenly that the reason why we so often find but little freedom at the mercy-seat is because we do not habituate ourselves to constant communion with God. There is not a continued out-going of our hearts to

Him who has sent us the epistles of His love, and who is ever giving us new expressions of His kindness and mercy.

"Oh, John, how ungrateful we are to our best friend, that we should ever allow any object to intervene between Him and our souls! Yet, alas, so it is, and when by His grace we return, and with melting hearts seek to renew the delightful intercourse, how kind, how ready to forgive, do we ever find Him, and how willing yet once more, to manifest himself to us, unworthy as we are. I have said *we*, but perhaps I had better ask, dear brother, is it ever so with you? I feel that you need to exercise much care and watchfulness to keep the heart in a spiritual frame of mind amid your complicated studies, lest it wander from God.

"The state of religion among us, at

the present time, is not a subject of pleasing interest for me to write upon, but rather a mournful one. I was going to say, that since you left us all remains as it was, but in the nature of things, we know that it cannot be so, for the course of the church, or of individual Christians, must be either onward or retrograde. That the latter is the alarming and humiliating truth, facts warrant me in saying. I believe there has not been one addition to either of our four united churches since you were here. The ways of Zion mourn because few or none 'come up to her solemn feasts.'

"To this lamentation, dear John, let us add with all our heart and soul, the prayer, 'O Lord, revive Thy work.'

"Yours,

"CHARLES MORSE."

"DEAR JOHN:—

"In writing to you I have generally prefaced the letters, and Mrs. Morse has filled the pages; but something I must, and ought, to write you now, in return for your last interesting, and very welcome, letter. Indeed, your letters are all interesting, but that one more particularly so, on account of that same preaching excursion of which you wrote.

"*And you have preached!* I have always looked forward to such an event with the deepest interest, and shall continue to do so, and when you shall have finished your preparatory studies, and are called and sent, not only like John the preacher, to preach repentance, but a whole gospel, which will be either

'a savor of life or everlasting death,' anxiety will be added to that interest.

"I was about to speak of the fearful responsibility of a minister of the gospel, of his desponding views of his own insufficiency, of trials in great variety, of times when not only all men do not come to him, but when few even of his own parish are careful to attend on his preaching, and lightly esteem those sermons, which, in preparation, have cost him many hours of anxious study, of throbbing temples, (more painful, even, than mine at this moment,) and a sinking heart. But enough of this. You, doubtless, have gone over the same ground in your own imagination, and have been led to exclaim, 'Who is sufficient for these things?' Paul, who said this, also added, 'I can do all things through Christ.' So you

must say. It is His work. He calls you to it, and while you patiently and faithfully perform your duty, you must be willing to leave the events with the Lord.

"Dear John, when I commenced writing, I did not mean to give you a sermon, but I fear you will so consider it; let us now turn the leaf, and view the other page. What is here? A settled pastor, honored and beloved for his 'work's sake,' by a kind and attentive people; a church increasing in numbers and graces, fed with the Bread of Life broken to them by your hands; mourners comforted and the weak established; a Sabbath school; a full and attentive audience, listening to the messages of the gospel with deep, but silent, emotions; sinners awakened; an inquiry meeting—tears of penitence

—souls saved—Christ honored—God glorified, and crowns of rejoicing throughout eternity. This, blessed be God, is no fiction, and it is on this side of the page that I would have you dwell.

"Ever yours,

"CHARLES MORSE."

The following extract from a letter addressed by Mr. Emerson to Mr. Morse, on hearing of his recent illness, shows with what affection and gratitude he reciprocated the warm interest of his Sabbath school teacher:—

"Oh, how gladly would I have flown to your bed-side to minister to your wants, and, if possible, to soothe your pains; but that privilege was denied me, and I could only bear you on my heart in supplication at the throne of grace. God has been better to me than

my fears, and has raised you up, I trust, to be an instrument of great and extensive usefulness in the world. To me you have been, as it were, a spiritual father. Your kind admonitions, counsels, warnings, and anxiety for my welfare, can never be effaced from my memory. Your unwearied efforts for my good, your desires for my growth in grace, your tender and watchful solicitude lest I should go astray, your affectionate farewell the night before I left for college, cannot soon be forgotten, and will endear you to me by a thousand ties."

Mr. Emerson was licensed to preach the gospel, April 26, 1849, and his first sermon was preached in the First Presbyterian church of Newburyport, where, twenty-four years previous, he had been baptized, and where, twelve years before, he had confirmed that rite of consecra-

tion, by a Christian profession. Rev. Mr. Stearns said, on meeting Mr. Morse, soon after this occasion, "Well, brother Morse, I suppose you feel now as if you had a son in the ministry."

In 1849, a small society, called the Whitefield church, assembled at Market Hall for worship. Rev. Mr. Emerson, after preaching to them with great acceptance, was invited to become their pastor. The decision called for much deliberation, as his delicate health seemed hardly equal to the formation of a new enterprise, which yet had entwined itself very much in his affections, and which had a great attraction in offering him a home in his native town, and among the cherished associations of his childhood. He consulted Mr. Morse, whose opinion was adverse to his acceptance of this invitation. He knew

that his young friend was winning and attractive, and admirably fitted to be the centre of such an enterprise; but, considering his slender health and delicate sensibilities, he would have desired for him a more quiet and less arduous and responsible field of labor.

But when, after frequent conversations, in which his objections were freely stated, he found that Mr. Emerson, with different convictions of duty, had decided to go forward, he remarked, "Well, if this work be of man, it will come to naught, but I will no longer oppose it, lest I be found to fight against God."

Mr. Morse did not, however, identify himself with the new parish movement. As a friend, he was consulted in every important step; and, at the request of several young men, who had formerly been his pupils, he took a class in the

Sabbath school, which was held at different hours from his own, so that the duties of the two did not conflict with each other.

Mr. Morse was not impulsive; caution was a natural and a cultivated trait of his character, and he weighed every step of his life with mental exactness and scrupulous conscientiousness. He was the last man to change his religious home easily, or to suffer some mere personal preference, or slight convenience, to determine his church connection. Such paltry trifling with that which should be permanent, such loose attachments to that which should have a sacred place in the heart is, in many instances, the bane of our churches, and a great hinderance to steadfast, elevated, and progressive piety. Whenever the possibility of connecting himself with "the new

enterprise," as it was often called, was presented to the mind of Mr. Morse, it caused many conflicting emotions. On one side, was an almost paternal affection for this young friend, and on the other was a strong attachment to his pastor and the church with which he had, for so long a period, been connected by the most endearing ties of Christian fellowship.

It was in the spring of 1850, after much prayer and deliberation, that he came to a final decision to cast in his lot with that infant church. The most powerful motive which led him to take this step was that he could be more useful there. The church with which he had been so long associated was a large and efficient one, and could afford to spare some of its members without disadvantage. To the infant church every

additional help was important. The following extract, from a letter written at the time, expresses his view of it:

"I hope, my dear mother, that you will not be surprised when you hear that I have made up my mind to unite myself with the Whitefield church, or think that I have acted rashly. I have given the subject mature deliberation, and have asked direction from God. I think I may be made more useful in this infant church, the number of male members being very small. You, I trust, will remember me at a throne of grace, always, that I may be guided, and quickened in Christian duty, and do something, however small it may be, and though it may be in some obscure corner of Christ's vineyard, although for this even, I am unworthy."

This decision was an event which filled

the heart of the youthful pastor with joy. His mother said to Mr. Morse, the evening after he had made known his determination, "This, I believe, has been one of the happiest days of John's life." The Sabbath that Mr. Morse was received by letter into his church was recorded in the pastor's journal as "a most solemn and interesting day." From that time, he gave the church of his adoption his warm affection and most untiring efforts. He was always present at the meetings for business or prayer, and never excused himself from any duty, however arduous, by which its welfare could be promoted; and it is believed that, in proportion to his means, no one did more in a pecuniary point of view. A few days before his death he was asked if he ever regretted the step he had taken, or the sacrifices he had

made for the church, and he replied with much emphasis, "No, never! I have ever loved that church, I shall love it while life lasts, and I shall love it in heaven."

But soon an unexpected trial was laid upon him. He had hardly taken his stand as helper at the side of his former scholar, now his beloved pastor, when it became too visible to every beholder that the disease which had threatened the youthful preacher on his very entrance into the ministry, was making rapid strides. Soon it was evident that the seal of death was upon him, and his winning voice could no longer be heard. God had called him, and the youthful herald was fast hastening to his eternal home. Mr. Morse once said to a friend, when speaking of Mr. Emerson's death, "It would be impossible for me to de-

scribe the sensations I felt when I first became convinced that he could not live. I could not dwell upon the thought for a moment, it was too keen agony for me to bear." In a letter to his sister, he wrote, "Oh, Catharine, my minister, my dear friend and pastor, Mr. Emerson, is fast sinking into the grave. He is even now at the very gate. Oh, with what anguish have I watched each step of this fatal disease as it advanced; and now we have no hope—none. He may live a few days longer, but he must die. It seems that prayers and tears can avail nothing in his case, though his people weep and pray without ceasing. He will be a public loss, for I feel that we shall hardly find another like him. I am confident that I never shall. But he is ready, waiting, quite on 'the verge of heaven.' God and his Saviour are

with him, and I feel it a blessed privilege to stand, as I often do, at the side of his dying bed, listening to that sweet voice, now almost lost in death, while he speaks of a Saviour's love and faithfulness, and urges the impenitent to seek Him.

"*And must he go?* O Lord, help me to bow submissively, and adore thy deep designs, for I know that they are just and right. Pray for us, dear sister, that God may still bless this infant church, and that this dark providence may be sanctified to us."

Every moment he had to spare was passed at that sick bed, watching every favorable symptom, and exerting every energy in attempts to comfort and cheer him; and when the final hour drew near, and he had followed him to the very brink of Jordan, and the youthful

pastor was receding from his sight, oh, there was an agony in that faithful teacher's heart it had never known before. From his first knowledge of him as a child, through the forming years of youth, into the early manhood in which he passed away, the intimacy and affection between them constantly increased; and when Mr. Morse witnessed the last sigh which set the spirit free, it is no wonder he exclaimed, "Half my life seems to have gone from me."

At the funeral of Rev. Mr. Emerson, Rev. Mr. Stearns touchingly alluded to Mr. Morse, in his sermon. "Among the members of that church, I see one here whose emotions are peculiarly deep on this tender occasion. It is he whom our deceased brother ever used to call 'My Sabbath school teacher,' who for many long years watched and prayed with all

a father's fondness over his childhood; and then, changing places with his dutiful pupil, sat in turn at his feet for instruction, and received from his hands the tokens of the Saviour's sacrifice. Ah, faithful one, God has given thee thy prayer. Through His grace, thou hast at length got him safe in among the church of the first born." It is said that, at this allusion, the Christian fortitude of Mr. Morse almost forsook him, and an audible groan testified to his agony of spirit.

And now, these two have met again; the teacher and his pupil, the pastor and his friend. They now fully understand the reasons which required the youthful preacher to be so soon withdrawn from his chosen field of labor. They see clearly how beautiful are *all* the designs of Infinite wisdom. There is no obscurity in

their vision, no lingering doubt respecting the welfare of Zion, no fear that among the dark things of earth the Ark of God will not be safe, or outride the storm, resting, as she does, on the rock of ages.

If their mission on earth was so beautiful, shedding around their path continually the fragrance of piety and holy love, what must be their ministrations in heaven! It is very pleasant to think of them as united again, having laid aside their robes of mortality, and being "clothed upon" with celestial garments. May they not be ministering spirits to some now on earth, whose names are written in the Book of Life as "heirs of salvation?" Was their work *all* accomplished when they passed away from our sight? May there not be some one for whom they prayed and

affectionately labored, apparently in vain, whose prodigal return to the Father's house they are now watching with intense interest.

CHAPTER VIII.

MR. MORSE AS A PARISHIONER.

As so many people sustain the relation of parishioner somewhere, it is important that it should be clearly understood and well filled. It is too often supposed to imply only a pecuniary contribution to preaching, and a fitful attendance on that preaching; or, perhaps in addition, some private criticism of the public exercises of the church, and an assertion of what may happen to be liked or disliked in them. It is possible that we may gain, from looking at the simple life

before us, an intimation of some farther duties in that relation.

The subject of our sketch was interested in every thing that affected the prosperity of the parish. He was a laboring man, working daily at his trade, which yielded him but small means; but he bore a generous share in any expenses that arose, and always encouraged any improvements. No one knew him to give grudgingly, or suspected him of any backwardness in pecuniary aid; he rather rated his own proportion as larger than did others, who knew his circumstances. He attended business meetings, and gave that time and attention, which is as essential as money, to the external prosperity of a religious society.

He was always at church on the Sabbath, and in the conference room at

all the appointed services. When these occurred on the evenings of the week, they must often have found him wearied, if, indeed, labor did not crowd down upon the actual time; but his work was dismissed, and he went to religious exercises as to refreshment. It became a matter of certainty, if he was absent, that he was either sick, or out of town. He was there not only in body, but in attention, giving a receptive hearing to all that was uttered, and ready to bear his own part, when a word of exhortation was expected from the laymen.

He endeavored to become acquainted with those who were associated with him in the parish. Though a man of very quiet habits, who naturally preferred friendship with a chosen few, rather than general, promiscuous acquaintance, he studiously cultivated a knowledge of,

and kindly intercourse with, those around him. There was an evening gathering once in two weeks in the society, for the purpose of promoting social feeling among the members of it, and whenever it was possible, he made it a point to be present, although with his habits of reading, his taste might have led him to prefer spending the evening at home.

To his minister, he was an attentive, reliable friend. He did not show his interest by compliments, nor by exacting demands, but by a kind appreciation of services, and that generous interpretation which is alike remote from petty, suspicious criticism, on the one hand, or empty praise on the other. He did not consume the time of their interviews by stereotyped reproaches about the infrequency of visits. We knew of a clergyman who once called on a parish.

ioner who was accustomed to keep up a debt and credit account of this kind, and a sudden and violent snow-storm detained him at the house until the next afternoon. As he was entering his sleigh to return home, his host said, in a complaining tone—

"Well, I *do* hope the next time you come to see us, you will stop and let us see something of you."

The clergyman turned around, to see if his parishioner was ironical; but no, he was uttering, in sober earnest, his oft-repeated remark on such occasions.

It was not by professions to that effect, but by the spirit with which he entered into such duties, that Mr. Morse showed a readiness for any service that might be necessary in the parish. If any arbitration or counsel was needed, in any difficult matter, his brethren felt

that all confidence could be placed in his caution, his kindness, his patience, and his desire for justice. He was peculiarly a safe man in all delicate and perplexing affairs, and although they sometimes weighed more on his mind than they would in a man of more buoyant temperament, he never shrank from them.

If private expostulation or public measures were really expedient for the benefit of individuals, or the safety of the church, he was willing to encounter whatever of unpleasant experience might lie in the way; yet such is the force of a simple, consistent character to make itself understood even among dissimilar elements, that the writer does not remember ever to have heard him called officious.

At one time, a Council was convened

to adjust some difficulties in a neighboring church, where personal prejudice and anger, had usurped the place of "brotherly love," and Mr. Morse was sent by his church as delegate. Afterwards an adjustment was effected, and another Council called to settle a minister over that people. "Do send brother Morse on that Council," said one of his brethren, "he has grieved so much over the strifes in that town, that he ought to have the satisfaction of going there, now there is peace."

An individual came into town with a letter of introduction from a brother minister of another city—where he had previously spent some months—addressed to the pastor of Mr. Morse. He was a stranger, and nothing was known of his former history, but he proved to be a man of considerable literary attain-

ments, and possessed of a very analytical mind. He was exceedingly interesting in conversation, particularly on moral subjects, for which he seemed to have a decided inclination, and on which he displayed much discriminating thought. As his acquaintance with him advanced, the clergyman to whom he had been introduced, felt a great interest in him, and especially when there appeared to be added to his other traits a deep religious experience. He professed to be a humble Christian, and received entire confidence as such.

Soon after this, he had a slight illness, and took some medicine, of which spirit was an ingredient. To the surprise of those around him, it roused an appetite for intoxicating drink, which, it then appeared, had previously controlled and degraded him, and had only been lying

dormant for awhile. He was missed from his boarding-house, and from his place of employment, and was found by his pastor in a state of intoxication. Not all the restraining motives which could be presented to him—not his reputation as a man and as a Christian,—sufficed to recover him. He seemed to be in the clutches of a demon he could not resist. His pastor would not give him up, yet he could restrain him from intoxicating liquors, only while he kept him in sight.

He went to Mr. Morse, and told him the circumstances of the case, and he, in his readiness for every work of mercy, offered to take charge of him, until the paroxysm was passed. It was a very busy season, but he laid his work entirely aside. It was a very difficult office, for the man was beyond the appeal

of reason, yet he must not feel coercion, or it would drive him to fury. He had a great deal of pride to be soothed, yet if he was not firmly dealt with, he would rush to his own senseless ruin. Wretchedly degraded was he then, and it was a very revolting spectacle to a man of sensibility like Mr. Morse. Nevertheless, like the good Samaritan, he strove to bind up the wounds of sin, and restore him to himself and to virtue.

How kindly, how unweariedly did he devote himself to the task, endeavoring to calm and soothe the agitation which the sudden withdrawal of a powerful stimulant produced, and to procure for him such remedies as might allay the morbid irritability of the nerves. With all the tenderness of a brother, he watched over him, following him in his

wanderings, persuading him to go with him to different spots of interest in town, and diverting his mind by the recital of pleasant incidents and reminiscences of his own youth, and gently withdrawing him from the poison he craved. Amid discouragements and rebuffs, this course was firmly continued, until, at length, reason was once more restored. Then the gratitude of the poor inebriate knew no bounds, and he exclaimed, "Oh, brother Morse, you and my pastor have saved me!"

When this fallen man came to himself, and began to see his own infatuation, and its terrible effects, his distress was most painful to witness. The world saw his sin, but they did not see the remorse and anguish, the self-loathing and despair, which followed. But Mr. Morse soothed him in his mental sufferings, as

he had in his paroxysms of mad appetite. Nor did his kindness stop here. Finding the man was in debt, and fearing that his pecuniary embarrassment might harass him, and lead him to drown his distress in the fatal cup, he went to friends, and solicited the necessary funds for his relief.

Thus it was that his pastor, his brethren, and all who were associated with him, found in Mr. Morse a reliable, faithful friend, shining the brighter the more he was tried.

CHAPTER IX.

INTELLECT CULTIVATED FOR GOD.

Amid all the varied duties in which Mr. Morse was so constantly engaged, joined to the exposure and toil attendant on his trade, as a ship-carpenter, one would naturally suppose that he could pay but little attention to the cultivation of his mind. It would be inferred that if a leisure hour ever did present itself, the wearied man would pass it in relaxation and rest. But it was with him a matter of conscience, no less than of pleasure, to secure time for study.

The value of a soul which Christ had died to redeem, made it seem a duty to improve every faculty to the utmost, and thus offer no barren or sluggish nature to Him who had paid such ransom for it. He cultivated his memory, his reasoning powers, his general intelligence, by every means within his reach. Notwithstanding he rose early and continued late at work, and often returned home with a wearied and aching frame, he managed to secure two hours every day for reading. We have seen how punctual he was in his attendance on religious services, how devoted to the calls of friendship, and of charity, yet, in this matter of study, he was scrupulously systematic.

In his selection of books, Mr. Morse sought such as were calculated to strengthen and enlighten his mind, and render

him more useful in the station where his Master had placed him. For light reading and miscellaneous literature, he had no time, and probably no taste, but he enjoyed works of science which showed the creative power and wisdom of God, and the harmony of the universe. Such authors as Thomas Dick, and Hugh Miller were peculiar favorites, and he gave to the subjects they presented, the most attentive thought. Clear reasoning like Butler's Analogy was very attractive to him, and link by link he made the argument his own. Books of history and biography were read, and re-read, until he had domesticated the facts they conveyed in his own mind. His reflection and systematic arrangement of the stores gained in reading, enabled him to find them for illustration when they were needed.

With his humility of character, (that lowliness of mind which esteems others better than himself, of which the apostle speaks,) he made no display of his information, but those who heard him speak frequently, knew that he often brought forth beautiful gems from his mine. He never gave his books a cursory perusal, but tried to cull from each something to enrich his mind and increase his usefulness as he came in contact with others. He was fond of good poetry. Milton's Paradise Lost was a favorite work, and Pollock's Course of Time was so familiar that he could repeat a great portion of it. He generally subscribed for five or six periodicals, and, of course, kept himself well acquainted with the religious movements of the day.

The remarkable unselfishness of his character is strikingly illustrated by his

habit in regard to those two hours of daily reading. Mr. Morse was not a strong man, and was subject to dyspepsia, and it was painful to him to read aloud. Beside this, he had a peculiar aversion to it. But with a determination in this, as in every thing else, to forget his own wishes in the desire to benefit others, he made it his almost constant habit to read aloud to his family whatever he might find of interest in the pages before him, and, as he was a good reader, and entered heartily into the spirit of the author, it was a great pleasure to listen to him. In this way, while receiving he was communicating instruction, and while forgetting himself, he was adding to the happiness of others. Nothing seems to speak of him more than do those unopened books, which now lie upon the table or

on the shelf; they almost seem with a mournful aspect to ask for their friend who once appreciated them so highly; but he no longer needs their aid, he has gone to the fountain.

While Mr. Morse was thus interested in the results of learning and genius, he sought, with peculiar earnestness, all those aids which helped to unfold or illustrate the rich meaning of the Scriptures. He generally read some portion of the Bible three times a day, besides reading it in course in his family, with a commentary. How different is this from the mechanical perusal of a few passages of the Bible, in the hurry of the morning, or just as the drowsiness of night is creeping over the mind. It has been beautifully said, "The careless reader, in lightly skimming the surface, may catch the sheen of here and there

a gem, the glimmer of gold dust; but the rarer jewels of truth, the deep-chambered veining of the precious ore, are to such eyes hidden treasures. The thoughts of God, by which He would make us, the pupils of his tuition, wise unto salvation, are not, in their clear but profound depths, so easily fathomed. Shutting up all this lore of spiritual things in one volume, our divine Teacher has meant us to search and master that one book with a patience and thoroughness of acquisition beyond those of all other scholarship." With Mr. Morse the Bible was law, and he sought to know and understand it. He could say, "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee," and from his heart he could add, "Oh, how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." A friend of his earlier years once

made the remark, "You must always expect that Charles Morse will live about right, for he is governed by Bible laws; and if you admit that the Bible is true, you will also admit that he is a good man. You would not expect that such a man would knowingly do wrong."

If every one who wishes to be a disciple of Christ, would be thus intent on knowledge and mental improvement, how much ignorant misapprehension of duty might be prevented, how much strength and richness added to the working power of the church! Many a man who is industrious in business, and frugal of his means, considers his hours of leisure his own, to be squandered on whatever may drift along, or if any portion is spent on books, they are so many and so heterogeneous that to skim over them is a kind of mental dissi-

pation which exhausts instead of invigorating his powers. The faculty of imagination was designed for cultivation, since it helps us the more readily to understand and sympathize with what is remote from us, and embellishes and multiplies the pleasures of life, but its intemperate indulgence in promiscuous fiction is not only waste, but ruin. A few books well chosen and well read, was the secret of our friend's improvement; and we would that others of larger leisure and more abundant advantages, would look at him, with his hard manual labor, his feeble frame, and many calls of duty, sacredly setting apart those two hours of study every day, as belonging to God, and be quickened to greater diligence and thoroughness of mental application.

CHAPTER X.

FAITHFUL IN FRIENDSHIP.

It is evident from the strong attachment felt for Mr. Emerson, that Mr. Morse was capable of very warm friendship. His refinement of taste, delicacy of feeling, and extreme conscientiousness, required that the individual whom he called friend should possess corresponding tastes and principles. He was kind and courteous to all who were associated with him, but from early youth, he showed discrimination in the choice of friends, and tenacity in his attachment to them.

With his love for the service of his

Master, it was natural that he should be peculiarly attracted towards the messengers of that Master. His affection for each of the ministers on whose preaching he attended, was very strong. He held them in the highest estimation, "esteeming them highly for their work's sake." The pastors of the church where he made his profession of Christian hope, were always peculiarly dear to him. His affection for Rev. Mr. Emerson is well known, but it was not all buried in the grave of his youthful pastor. There was an empty pulpit to be again occupied, and a bereaved people who were early left "as sheep without a shepherd." We can well imagine with what emotions Mr. Morse would enter his closet at that time, and those who knew him best, can seem to hear, even now, the fervent petitions which welled

forth from his full heart, as he prayed that the "Jehovah of Hosts" would guide that stricken band as "a pillar of cloud by day and of fire by night." When the present pastor, Rev. Mr. Spalding, came among them, he regarded the choice as an answer to the prayers of the church; and was ready to give him a cordial welcome. He continued to identify himself with his pastor, rallying around him in aid or advice, ever prompt to second all his plans of benevolence, and heartily rejoicing in his prosperity.

It may not be inappropriate to mention, in connection with his faithfulness to all interests of his friends, his devotion to one sacred trust left him by Rev. Mr. Emerson. A short time before he died, he called Mr. Morse to his bedside, and requested that the care

and tenderness which had been bestowed on himself, might be transferred to his beloved mother, who was soon to be left sorrowing behind. The pledge was given, and most sacredly kept. Shortly after the death of her son, she was again bereaved, and left a solitary widow, and then he was unwearied in his exertions to supply the place of the loved ones she had lost. He did not from that hour "take her to his own home," but he was a son to her in her lonely dwelling. Not a day passed in which he did not visit her once or more, endeavoring to lighten her every burden, shield her from care, and perform for her many of those household services which, in a family, depend on the husband or son. Mrs. Emerson, though a sensible, intelligent woman, a social companion, and a devoted Christian,

was, as all her acquaintances knew, a person of a highly excitable temperament, often the victim of her feelings, and subject to seasons of deep depression. On these occasions he would listen with the greatest of patience and tenderness, while she poured into his ear the sad tale of all her real and imaginary griefs. His efforts were unwearied to soothe her morbid sensibilities. With a nice discrimination of the case, with a tact and skill peculiarly his own, he would present topics of consolation, and suggest such methods of relief as he felt were best adapted to meet the various changing phases of such seasons, and he had the satisfaction of knowing that he was often successful in soothing her distress, restoring her composure, and giving her more cheerful views of things around her. He never grew

weary in his attentions, as time and increasing infirmities made them more difficult, but rather redoubled his efforts until she no longer needed human aid.

During the illness of Rev. Mr. Emerson, Mr. Morse was requested by him to visit a young shipmaster who was sick. He went immediately to the sick-bed, and carried him his usual blessing of a kind, sympathetic presence, and Christian words, and there sprang up a strong attachment between him and this young man. The long thoughtfulness of sickness, its solemn warning, and the pious counsels he received, were blessed to the invalid, and his return to health was not a return to his accustomed habits of feeling, for a new interest had been given him, and he became a humble disciple of Jesus.

To Mr. Morse, this new friend gave

great pleasure, and he felt the greatest interest in the development of his Christian character. His uprightness, his decision, his energy, made his influence very valuable. His business on the sea brought him into close contact with men who were rough in manners, and not accustomed to much respect for religious scruples; but their shrewdness led them to see that he had the ring of the true metal, and if they were not changed, they were modified by his manly piety.

"He had a way with him," said one of his sailors, "that you could not get round. I never used to be very choice in my words, but somehow I did not want to swear when he was near, and the other hands felt just so." When on shore, he entered very warmly into all the duties of the church, and spoke

clearly and forcibly in the conference room of his experience and his views.

All his brethren loved him, and to Mr. Morse he was especially dear, and many an hour of Christian fellowship did they have together, strengthening each other in faith. At the close of the year 1852, he was to sail for Norfolk, Va., and great interest was taken to furnish religious books and papers for him to distribute among the crew and others, as he had opportunity. He bade good-bye to his friends, with high hopes of life, but was never heard from; it is supposed he was lost in a storm which occurred at that time. Mr. Morse mourned for him as for a brother, and in his last sickness he gave particular directions for two handsome Bibles—one for the only son of this friend, who bore the name of Charles Morse, and

the other for the little girl, Flora, whose young life had given him so much pleasure. To the last, he thought of his friends.

In speaking of his Christian attachments, we may name one who still lives to mourn his beloved friend. This was a friend of his riper years, in whom he reposed the utmost confidence, and whose sympathy was, through life, a source of pure enjoyment to him. They first met in 1826, when both were on a water excursion during the summer. In many respects, their tastes were very similar, and both had set their faces heavenward.

In speaking of their intercourse at the time of their first acquaintance, particularly of the nights when they were sailing together, Mr. Morse used to say, during his last sickness, "Brother P.,

those were happy seasons to us. We used to talk together, read together, and sing together, and I wonder now that we did not pray together; but I suppose we hardly felt ourselves strong enough for that."

These friends soon became members of the same church, and were ever after helpers of each other's joy. When, in the course of events, Mr. Morse felt constrained from conviction of duty to change his church relationship, the sundering of this tie was one of the most painful circumstances connected with that event. Perhaps his friend never knew how much this struggle cost him. They had labored side by side in the church and the Sabbath school—their feelings and opinions had been in harmony—and now, though still members of the same great Church, they were to labor in

different fields, their interests asunder, and liable possibly to clash. But their friendship stood the test. Their harmony was not interrupted, and their confidence, esteem and affection were not diminished.

The devoted attachment exhibited by these friends during the sickness of Mr. Morse, was very touching. Like David and Jonathan, whose friendship has been sculptured for all time by inspiration, they were "very pleasant" to each other. Mr. Morse would say, "Brother P. is 'a brother born for adversity,'" and no brother could watch with more tenderness than did he over the sufferer, striving in every way that affectionate kindness could suggest, to add to his comfort or mitigate his sufferings.

During the spring of 1858, when the religious meetings of the town were so

frequent, and so full of rich spiritual interest, Mr. P. would deny himself an attendance on what he enjoyed so highly, and wend his way to the chamber of his sick friend, and endeavor by his presence and sympathy to beguile his weariness. When, in the arms of faith and prayer he had carried his suffering friend to a compassionate Saviour, Mr. Morse would often exclaim, "Oh, if the communion of saints is so sweet on earth, what must heaven be?" Sometimes he would say, "If it is more blessed to give than to receive, brother P. must be doubly blessed."

In both the churches with which Mr. Morse had been connected, he had many warm friends, to whom his own heart was strongly united. He, indeed, loved the image of Christ wherever he saw it, and when he found any one living

very near to Jesus, and striving to do his work faithfully, there his heart rested. He once remarked, that "there was nothing which seemed to give him a sweeter view of heaven, than the friendship existing between two faithful Christians, whose aims were to honor the Saviour, and, as far as it was in their power, to do his will on earth."

CHAPTER XI.

INTEREST IN PUBLIC MORALITY.

WHATEVER concerned public virtue or justice was of interest to Mr. Morse. He was too constant a student of sacred Scripture, too much imbued with the spirit of prayer, to be led away by one moral topic, in utter disproportion to all others.

It has been said of some men, that "they do not possess opinions, but are possessed by them," and it is sad that so many well-meaning persons should suffer some particular moral interest, which is true and noble of itself, to usurp the place of the whole Christian system, and thus place the truth they

advocate in false relations. Thence arise angry disputes, separations of brethren, and all the evil train of discords, but these are no part of the truth itself—only of its perversions.

Mr. Morse was earnest in his desire that vice should be banished from the community, and injustice, oppression, and corruption should cease in the affairs of the country. He informed himself on these subjects, and spoke of the beneficent reforms of the day impartially, but hopefully. At one time he was conversing with one who had allowed political prejudice to blind his eyes to the sin of human bondage, and the enormity of any laws which would extend and perpetuate it. After bringing facts and arguments to bear upon the subject, and seeing that his opponent only grew more positive in his declamations against free-

dom, the tears started, and he quietly closed the door, and went away. "It was a most forcible rebuke," said one who was present.

At the time that Mr. Morse was an apprentice, the subject of temperance had not begun to agitate the public mind. In the ship-yard where he worked, it was the custom of all to take liquor at certain hours of the day, feeling that it strengthened them for labor. He saw that the custom, if not dangerous to every individual, was often an injurious example to those who were weaker, and at the age of nineteen, he came to the resolution to abandon the habit. He had never read or heard any thing on the subject, but he felt that it was a useless, expensive and dangerous custom, and though in his own case he apprehended no evil result, yet he saw, from the experience of those around him,

that it was not safe to parley with temptation. With the firmness for which he was always remarkable, he was decided in his purpose. This exposed him to ridicule and opposition from his companions, who deemed his refusal an absurd scruple. But from that hour, he was a warm friend and advocate of total abstinence.

When temperance became a subject of popular movement, he met with Dr. Beecher's Lectures, which struck him as having a right bearing on the subject, and calculated to do much good. He immediately purchased the book, and placed it the hands of as many as possible.

There was one friend, in whom he felt a deep interest, who did not take the same view of the subject that he did. Mr. Morse felt very desirous that he should become acquainted with the

contents of the book, and knowing that he was not very fond of reading, he took pains to go to his house, evening after evening, and there read the entire volume aloud to him. This was the greater effort, because it was painful and irksome to him to read aloud, but the result was good, and his friend came over to the side of strict temperance, and there he still stands.

We have given this brief chapter, because it seems to us to enforce two excellent points. One is, that it is the duty of every man, however humble may be his circumstances, to form his own opinions on all matters of right and wrong; the other is, that every one has some acquaintances, with whom he can use persuasion and argument, that they also may rally around the truth. If this is done, reform and progress will be no longer doubtful.

CHAPTER XII.

RELIGION IN DAILY LIFE.

"The trivial round, the common task,
Would furnish all we ought to ask;
Room to deny ourselves; a road
To bring us daily nearer God."—KEBLE.

As Mr. Morse was not one of those who excel in some prominent traits of character, which are in strong contrast with certain deficiencies, it is difficult to do justice to him in detail. We must say of him, as did his pastor, in a sermon preached after his death, "His religious principle permeated his whole life. As a mechanic it made him faithful to his employer, truthful in all his

statements. It was with him as much a Christian duty to execute a contract according to the letter of the agreement, as it was to pray or to read his Bible. His religion went with him into the dock, and, influenced by its holy inspiration, he wrought at his daily task. He did not have devotion in the church and duplicity in business, but as if ever under the watchful eye of Heaven, all his steps were taken in the fear of the Lord."

It is believed that no one who was much acquainted with his character would ever hesitate to commit any trust to him. A man who knew him at his trade, said, "When you gave him any thing to do he did it thoroughly, whether he got the value of his time or not. If you gave him a boat to repair, he made it as tight as a cup. There was

no mistake about him, he was a downright faithful man." Another, who had good opportunities for knowing him, remarked, "I have often said that he was almost the only person whose word I could fully believe. I never knew him to break a promise, and I could receive his statements without doubt or qualification."

Strict as he was in his own rules of conduct, when the dishonesty of others affected him, he exercised true forgiveness and charity. A man once employed him on a piece of work, for which he could have had no intention of paying him, as he had previously made an assignment of all his property to his creditors. Mr. Morse went on with his engagement, entirely ignorant of this, and purchased materials from his own means, until the work was completed,

when he was informed that his employer was bankrupt, and could not pay him. He showed no resentment for this, and would not suffer others to speak harshly of the circumstance. But although he could so generously forgive an injury to himself, it grieved him to the heart when the dishonest life of any one brought disgrace to the church of Christ. He was once asked, "Why was not your voice, which is always so welcome, heard in the prayer-meeting to-night." "I will tell you," he replied, "for you ought to know. On my way to the chapel I was told of one who had named the name of Jesus, and had made high professions, and yet had been attempting to wrong his neighbor and keep him from what he knew to be his just due. When I took my seat, my heart sank within me, it was too full for

me to speak. I wanted to prostrate myself on the floor of that chapel, and in agony cry out, "O, Lord, give not thy blood-bought heritage over to reproach."

Mr. Morse was remarkable for doing just the work at hand, whether it was in his business, or in his spiritual life. It is not necessary to wait for extraordinary opportunities for usefulness; to him who patiently "does the duty nearest him," God will send the special occasions. One day, while Mr. Morse was at work in the hold of a vessel, lying at the wharf, he heard the hurried rush of footsteps, and the cry "A boy overboard!" He immediately sprang to the deck, but only in time to see the lad sinking for the last time. Without waiting to divest himself of his clothing, he jumped overboard, but the tide was

coming in, and when he rose to the surface, the strong current had borne the boy so far under the vessel that he was beyond his reach. In the very death-struggle, he threw out his arms, and Mr. Morse succeeded in grasping his hand, and drew him out of the water. The lad was apparently lifeless, but he was resuscitated; one moment more and he would have been so far under the vessel, that no earthly arm could reach him. A number of persons on the wharf were anxious spectators of the thrilling scene, but no other person made any effort to save him.

Another similar circumstance illustrates the wonderful providence which often causes the most important results to hinge on apparently trivial incidents. One day, when Mr. Morse was at his work, there arose in his mind a strong

inclination to go home. He knew not why he should feel this desire, as there seemed to be nothing imperative to call him there, and he resisted the impulses and continued his work. Again the impression came, and grew stronger and stronger. He *must go home*, and without delay. Finally, he dropped his tools, feeling that he must obey that inward voice, and walked towards his home, though he knew not the reason why he should do so. As he reached the door, his mother stood there, waiting to see some one who would do a small errand for her, which she could not conveniently defer, and as she saw her son approaching she asked the favor of him, and he, with his usual kindness, instantly complied with the request. As he passed into High street, in the vicinity of the Pond, he heard the cry, "My child! my child! will no one save him?" He

rushed to the spot whence the sound issued, and found a mother wringing her hands in agony, while her little child was sinking in the water. Mr. Morse was just in season to rescue him from a watery grave, and restore him to the arms of his grateful mother. The little one had wandered, in its play, to the pond, and the mother, in seeking for it, had found it in that dangerous position. In speaking of this circumstance subsequently, Mr. Morse said, "I should like to know the future history of that child, the providence of God was so striking in its deliverance. I was neither superstitious, nor governed much by impulse; I never remember to have had my mind so impressed before, yet had I resisted that inward voice, and continued at my work *one moment longer*, the child would have perished!"

We have spoken of Mr. Morse's in-

dustry and faithfulness in daily labor at his trade, and of those two hours of study every day, that he might graft knowledge on to the stock of his natural abilities, that thus the Great Husbandman might find fruit. But there was another part of his work in which he was just as constant and faithful. We mean his ministrations to the aged, the lonely, the destitute and the afflicted. These were not occasional, when very peculiar cases came to his knowledge, or when any direct claims were made upon him. They were desolated or suffering households which became known to him in his daily walk, and after they were known they were never forgotten or neglected, while their necessities continued. His was not a kind of benevolence which gains enthusiasm in co-operative efforts with others, which is attracted by

novelty, or held by gratitude. He was sensitive and grateful in his own nature, but he did not ask for a grateful appreciation of his services, nor withdraw them if it was wanting. There was one old lady who was not remarkable for amiability of temper or any feelings of gratitude, yet not a week passed for nearly twenty years, but she received some donations from him, either a dinner from his own table, or some other offering. She had no claim on him, except that she was needy, and a member of the church to which he formerly belonged. When others spoke of her peculiarities, he once designated her as "one of the unlovely Christians," and playfully remarked, "Grace is sometimes grafted on a crab-stick." So it was, that he *always* had some particular individuals who were the special objects of his bounty. But he literally obeyed the in-

junction, "When thou doest alms, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth."

In order to be charitable, he denied his tastes. He had a great fondness for books and pictures. He used to say to his wife, "If I could afford it, there is one luxury I should enjoy exceedingly, and that would be to surround myself with beautiful pictures." A friend on whom he sometimes called, says, "I always noticed that whenever he came to our house he looked with great pleasure at the different engravings in the room. I remember when he first saw them, he went to each one, and examined it particularly, and I was struck with the justice of his criticisms. He discerned very quickly the best points of a picture. I once heard him comment on a large lithograph of 'The Translators of the Bible,' which interested him very much,

and he spoke with a nice discrimination of the characteristics of Luther, Melancthon and the others, showing his familiarity with the subject, and his natural taste."

That he might be true to his religious obligations, and charitable to the needy, Mr. Morse practiced the most rigid economy. As every one should do, who wishes to be just, he kept a strict account of all his expenses, and never, for the last thirty years of his life, allowed the 1st of January to pass without settling all his accounts, and paying all his debts. His income never exceeded five hundred dollars a year, yet of this amount, it was his rule to give, at least, one eighth part in charity. In the sermon, to which reference has been made, it is said that, "Of his charities he made no account in detail, lest, perhaps, the review might incite to spiritual

pride. How strikingly does this teach us the Christian spontaneity which is one of the crowning graces of the sanctified life—the Holy Spirit creating such harmony with God's will in the heart, that benevolent acts spring from it like the vegetation of the rich soil. Of worldly expenditure he took note and careful watch, but the charities which were for God's service sprang from the fullness of love, and passed unrecorded."

May we linger yet longer on the example of Mr. Morse, which shows the value of being "just before one is generous." It is to be feared there are some who will cast large gifts into the Lord's treasury, while, at the same time, they withhold what is due to their fellowmen; and of such may not the Master inquire, as they present their offerings, "Who hath required this at your hands? Wash ye, make you clean, put away the

evil of your doings before mine eyes, seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow." Mr. Morse often observed, "A religion that did not make men honest was not worth much." He was asked one day if he believed there could be such a thing as a dishonest Christian. He looked suddenly into the face of the inquirer, and answered, with great emphasis, "No! There may be dishonest *professors;* and, to my grief, I fear there are too many such at present; but a dishonest *Christian*, — why there is no meaning in the phrase! Christianity, we are told, is to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbor as ourselves, and, knowing this, can we cheat, rob, or take an unfair advantage of him to benefit ourselves, and yet suppose that we love and obey the law of God?"

If we look at his practice of a strict

account and regular settlements of expenses, simply as it relates to personal benefit, the wisdom of it must be acknowledged. He could walk abroad with peace of mind, conscious that he "owed no man any thing but love," and that such a course was in obedience to the law of God. He felt that a Christian should be scrupulously honest, and he often said, "the cause of Christ suffers much from the *failure of its professed friends to pay their little debts;* it is these dead flies that cause the ointment to send forth an unpleasant odor—it is these little foxes that spoil the vines." Truly, it may be said of Mr. Morse that,

> "What his charity impairs,
> He saves by prudence in affairs,
> And thus is just to all mankind."

CHAPTER XIII.

MISSIONARY SPIRIT.

"Sow in the morn thy seed,
At eve hold not thy hand;
To doubt and fear give thou no heed;
Broadcast it o'er the land!

"Thou canst not toil in vain:
Cold, heat, and moist and dry,
Shall foster and mature the grain
For garners in the sky."—MONTGOMERY.

FULL as Mr. Morse's life was of religious duties, of busy charities, of heartfelt sympathy with those around him, he did not forget the interests of Christian extension—the legacy of missions which Jesus has left to all his disciples. He was careful to inform himself of all

that the messengers of the gospel were doing in different parts of the world, and he arranged this information in his own mind, so that each portion of the missionary field should be distinct, and he could understand the relation of each part to the entire result. It is to be feared that an intelligent comprehension of missionary operations is not sufficiently common, and this want is practical in its consequences, for we cannot sympathize with that of which we have no knowledge—hence lukewarm zeal follows dim perceptions.

The monthly concert of missions was one of peculiar interest to Mr. Morse, and his contribution of intelligence to the reports of the evening was very valuable. It was customary at his church to assign to each brother some particular post of missions to report, in order

to stimulate to greater diligence in inquiry, and to give freshness and individuality to the subjects of the meeting. The plan seemed to insure more distinctness and thoroughness of investigation, and greater interest in presentation to the audience. Mr. Morse had China assigned to him, and he spared no pains to collect every item of information respecting that nation, and every indication of future good to the people. He entered into its political history, the character and customs of the inhabitants, and the particular application of Christianity to their wants. He interwove his reflections in a most interesting manner, with the facts he presented, and clustered around them his own thoughts in a way peculiar to himself. The philosophical turn of his mind and his habits of analysis were very evident

in his remarks in the conference room, and they prevented the often told truth from ever growing hackneyed from his lips. His faith threw a beautiful light and heat over his subjects. He believed that China would one day be open to receive the message of salvation, and for this he prayed most fervently. Those who have listened to his voice in the chapel, as he spoke of that nation, and of the rescue of the whole heathen world from darkness, cannot forget him, nor, it is to be hoped, the interests so dear to him, and made so interesting by him. If this memory can incite to the same faithfulness in others, his missionary work on earth is not yet finished. "The seed springs up while the husbandman sleepeth."

To the cause of missions, and of every pious enterprise which claimed his

attention, Mr. Morse was very liberal. He considered his contributions to such as much due, as any debt he owed to a fellow-man. We have stated how small his income was, but no matter for that; he often said, "I don't think much of that charity which gives what we think we can spare without any self-denial; we ought to give till we feel it." Some one made the objection, "There are so many calls," and pressed him for his opinion, when he said, "I believe that I never said no to a call in my life, and never but once did I regret giving." He not only gave liberally to objects of benevolence, but he performed a large amount of labor as solicitor of subscriptions. In this duty his delicacy of feeling and ready perceptions gave him great advantage; he knew *how* to approach persons, and to

be earnest in his cause without being untimely or unduly importunate. He was very successful, and would often succeed in applications where others failed. He once said, "I believe begging is my forte."

In the autumn of 1856, the Whitfield Church engaged, by the advice of the pastor, in a home missionary effort to supply the spiritual wants of the needy, and to draw to the house of God those who had no stated place of worship. A benevolent individual in the society gave, for this purpose, a large number of the "Messenger" and the "Child's Paper." The city was districted, and different members of the church volunteered their services, taking such districts as they chose for their own, to visit the destitute families in them, distribute tracts, and papers, and by

other methods, endeavor to interest them in religious truth. Reports of the success of this mission were rendered every month, at a meeting held for this purpose, and they were very interesting to those who heard them.

This method was very congenial to the Christian activity and benevolence of Mr. Morse, and he took an earnest part in the movement. He always chose for his districts those localities that would be most likely to have the greatest destitution. He was indefatigable in the good work, and often spent entire days in going from house to house, conversing personally with individuals, and endeavoring to persuade those who had no religious home, to attend some church, and to gather the destitute children into the Sabbath school.

In all these efforts he was never treated

ill, and seldom were his tracts or papers refused. When he effected an opening, he did not forget it, but followed the entering wedge with repeated strokes. Where he called a second time, he was sure to meet a cordial welcome, especially if there were any children in the family. His kindly manner, and his Child's Paper were ever a passport to every youthful heart. If he saw children at play round the door of a dwelling, or saw them hanging around some of the inmates, he took courage, and felt he had some clue to the sympathies of the elders.

In these walks of usefulness, he would sometimes find one of "God's hidden ones," as he used to call them, some poor, afflicted, and perhaps *neglected*, disciple, and well did he feel himself repaid for all his efforts, if he could

by sympathy and kindness, give consolation to such, and turn their darkened thoughts to the great Fountain of light. Although this mission had a direct reference to spiritual want, yet he did not neglect the temporal destitution which often met him in these haunts. He followed the example of his beloved Master, who "fed the multitude," and gave them healing for disease, while he taught them eternal life.

Mr. Morse continued in this mission until his last sickness, and it is to be deeply regretted that no written reports of these labors can now be found. Many a story of touching pathos did he tell, and many a useful lesson did he extract from his visits of mercy, but they were not preserved. The flower has faded, though the perfume lingers still. We cannot present specific instances, as we

could wish, but we can see that he closely imitated Him who "went about doing good," both to the bodies and souls of men, and that he literally obeyed the injunction, "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ." His Christian life was one continued mission, and though he has departed, leaving no written record of his deeds of mercy, yet they are recorded on high, and will one day be known.

CHAPTER XIV.

LIFE OF PRAYER.

Mr. Morse was a man of prayer, and here was the secret of his strength. A plant shut up where the rays of the sun cannot reach it, grows sickly, and finally withers and dies; but if placed where it can receive light and heat, its life advances, and it will reach maturity and beauty. So with the Christian. If lives continually beneath the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, he will grow, and thrive, and be "strong in the Lord," and bring forth abundant fruit.

Prayer, to be constant and effective to the individual, requires regularity of time and place. With Mr. Morse, it was the custom always to retire three times a day to his closet; and whenever any burden, either of a temporal or spiritual nature, oppressed him, he did not rush into the world, and lose his anxiety by mixing with its busy scenes, but he went to that Friend of friends, and poured out to Him every perplexity and sorrow; then and there, with childlike confidence, he would leave them, feeling that his heavenly Father would order all things well. He frequently remarked that "there was no trial too small for us to carry to the throne of grace; and if we should pray more, and complain less, God would be honored, and religion would not present the gloomy aspect it now does before the world."

All who ever heard him pray, felt at once that he lived very near the mercy seat. A lady was asked if she was acquainted with Mr. Morse, and she replied: "Not personally, but I have frequently heard him pray at the School Street Chapel, and I think I can judge something of his character from his prayers." A little boy who once heard him pray with a family who were in affliction, noticed that some one was speaking of a person by the name of Morse, and inquired if it was "the Mr. Morse who prayed so good." When he led the devotions of others there was an appropriateness of expression, a fervency of spirit, and depth of feeling, combined with such profound reverence and deep prostration of the soul before God, that those who heard him felt he was one who "walked with God." But it was in

his home devotions, as priest over his own household, and before the family altar, that he excelled. Here in the bosom of his family, without any restraint, would he bring in the arms of faith those who were so dear to him, and with simple, childlike confidence, commit them and all their concerns into the arms and keeping of his heavenly Father. He who was so constantly in communion with God, could not fail to carry about with him a savor of heavenly and divine things.

" When one who holds communion with the skies,
Has filled his urn where these pure waters rise,
And once more mingles with us meaner things,
'Tis e'en as if an angel shook his wings;
Immortal fragrance fills the circle wide,
That tells us whence his treasures are supplied."

Mr. Morse was peculiarly welcome to

all in trial and affliction. He felt acutely the sorrows of his fellow-men. Perhaps if there was one marked trait of character in which he shone most brightly, it was in his efforts to mitigate human suffering and woe. He almost seemed to be made for this very purpose. Having himself been chastened and disciplined by suffering, he became, as one expressed it, an angel of mercy to every sorrowing heart. There was something in the placid but subdued expression of his countenance, and his peculiar tone of voice, which told at once on the heart of the afflicted, secured their confidence and love, and led them to feel that they had his sympathy and prayers.

We have spoken of his benevolence, but with him charity and prayer were so associated together that we cannot separate them. When he had spoken

his words of kindness, or breathed his petitions to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, he often opened that little purse, which was most frugally consulted in his own behalf, and left some tangible token of his interest. If he visited a family where he saw that the want of a little money was severely felt, and it was not at that time convenient for him to give, he would call on friends, and represent the case to them, and when a donation was obtained, it was carried to the needy one with so much delicacy, that it was felt to be a token of esteem, and not alms. There is a vast difference in the manner of bestowing charity. Some will visit a needy friend, whose heart may be sensitively alive to a new position of trial, and their assistance will prove a soothing balm; others may bring a similar offering,

and it will be like a dagger, only to open a wider wound.

"Oh," said one of the children of sorrow, "what a blessing were Mr. Morse's visits to me. Often, when I felt crushed, and ready to sink under my troubles, he would come in, and his wonderful prayers, uttered in those gentle tones, and his deep and soothing sympathies, were like balm to my troubled soul."

Said another, "I can never forget his visits to me in a time of deep affliction. He came again and again, conversing and praying with me; and oh, such prayers as he offered! Surely, I thought, they must be answered. His visits were always full of comfort and consolation." Another exclaimed, "How my heart rejoiced when I saw that precious man coming in at the door. He would always

say something to encourage me amid my difficulties, and often bring some little delicacy, either from his table or his garden, and inquire into my wants, and pray for me and mine, as no other person ever did. I shall never again find a friend like him." One who had been sick said, "I shall long remember his visits to my sick-chamber. However others might neglect me, he never did. There are but few so well qualified to visit a sick-chamber, as he was. I was always comforted and profited; his calls were like angels' visits."

He once visited a dwelling where death had entered, and removed two of its inmates. One of them was a father, who had left a little family of children. It was on a lovely Sabbath evening, and the little ones were gathered around their widowed mother,

when the footsteps of Mr. Morse were heard, and he took his seat among them. As this family did not worship at the same church with him, he was a stranger to the children, but as he entered into conversation, and spoke of the unseen realities of the other world — of the wisdom of God in sending affliction to his creatures — of his gracious designs in every trial,—the attention of the children was arrested, and they gazed upon him with a kind of admiring wonder.

At the close of the evening, at the request of the mother, he knelt down and prayed. Language would seem inadequate to describe that prayer. He appeared like one talking face to face with God. The solemnity of his manner, the deep humility and prostration of soul, the earnest pleading, the strong faith, the

melting tone—can it ever be forgotten? It almost seemed as if one needed to be sheltered in the "cleft of the rock," and covered by the Omnipotent hand, while "the glory of God was passing by."

As in every trial of his own, his refuge was the throne of grace, so did he attempt to lead every sufferer there also. Often, when visiting those who were in affliction, he would speak of the sweet privilege of drawing near to God. He lived in this constant communion, and he well knew the fullness of that overflowing Fountain, and longed that every weary soul should avail itself of the rich supply. He once remarked—"Prayer is a privilege of which we seem to form a low conception. We sometimes feel it a task to break off awhile from the world, and retire to hold

communion with the King of kings. How strange! we have sorrows which none but God can heal, wants which none but he can supply, sins which he alone can pardon; and the immortal part of our nature has a thirst for something more than earth can furnish, and yet, how far we live below our privilege! how little time we spend in prayer!"

CHAPTER XV.

LAST DAYS.

"Though the light of his life to our vision is o'er,
The light of his spirit will burn evermore."

It would be an omission in this sketch, if no mention was made of the faults of its subject. "The faults of a good man should be exhibited like the scars of a hero," says one. They show the struggles through which he has passed, and how much grace has had to overcome. Faults subdued are the trophies of the Holy Spirit.

Mr. Morse spoke of himself as naturally irritable, and from his quick and

sensitive feelings we can easily infer such a possibility; but if so, his weakness was made strength, for his caution, forbearance, and patience were very remarkable. He had so much firmness and persistency in the Christian course, that perhaps without the controlling influence which reigned in his character, he might have been obstinate or "set in his ways." He certainly felt that he had a sinful nature to contend with—to conquer. No one felt this more than himself; no one mourned more deeply over the remains of indwelling sin. He said one day to a friend—

"If, as a rebel, I have been pardoned, and washed in atoning blood, and justified, I have a deep conviction, from the experience of every hour, that I am sanctified only in part, and should

I ever reach heaven, oh, it would be a wonder of mercy."

His pastor said to the church, "Those of us who have been acquainted with him for the last few years, hardly know the constitutional foundations of his character, he was so much transformed by the power of grace."

He made but one impression, even on very dissimilar people, and that was of entire consecration to Christ. His whole being was held by him as belonging to God, and this principle so entirely permeated him, that, like a mother's devotion to her child, it did not need forcing or special motive, but rose spontaneously and supremely above every other consideration. This work of the Holy Spirit gave a unity and beauty to the humble life, and made it fragrant with holy affections. His heart

and his treasure were one. Unobtrusive as he was in appearance, retiring and rather reserved in manner, earning his living by hard, manual labor, and without any of those abundant opportunities which invite the sons of fortune to usefulness, yet he made others so much better and happier by his presence, and left a memory so "blessed," as we are told that of "the just" shall be, that we would fain linger before we speak of the *last* days.

During the summer of 1857, Mr. Morse's health, which was never firm, began to fail, and he often complained of lassitude and weakness. In October of that year, while at his daily work, his foot slipped, and he fell into the water, by which accident he took a severe cold. The result was a fever, which finally terminated in a decline.

His sickness was protracted, and from a complication of diseases, his sufferings were often severe. From the first he had most distressing and sleepless nights, and from January a severe cough racked his whole frame.

During this painful sickness, he showed the most meek, uncomplaining patience and submission to the Divine will, and no murmuring or fretful word escaped his lips. He received, with deep emotion, the sympathy of friends, and his gentle "I thank you," testified to the gratitude he felt for their efforts to relieve his sufferings, and minister to his wants. Like many victims of consumption, he was for a long time flattered with the hope of recovery, and indeed there were times when his friends indulged the same delusive dream. He would, on such occasions say, "I believe

that the bitterness of death is passed, and I shall yet praise the Lord in the land of the living." When his expectations of recovery were thus bright, he would often remark, "I cannot say, with Paul, that I desire to depart. I should love to live and labor for the church a little longer; but I have no will about it; I am willing to leave it with my heavenly Father, to do just as he pleases;" and he would often close by repeating the words of Watts:

"Now I forbid my carnal hope,
My fond desires recall;
I give my mortal interests up,
And make my God my all."

In the winter and spring of 1858, there arose one of the most remarkable revivals of religion that our country has ever known. From Maine to Georgia, from the busiest marts of trade, and

from the most retired hamlets, there came the report of the profound spiritual inquiry, which was the one absorbing topic of the people. This new interest, which was without any external cause, without any noise or excitement, was prolonged and intense. Instead of business or politics, the main subject of conversation in the cars or the steamboat was religion. Places of amusement were converted into chapels of prayer, daily meetings for conference and prayer sprang up in the busiest places, and were attended by all ages and classes of people. The preceding year had been one of financial calamity, and men had been taught how utterly unreliable is all material good, and had seen that

"He builds too low who builds beneath the skies."

The riches of Divine love were seen in contrast with the disaster and poverty

which had saddened so many homes. Christians might well exclaim:

"Lo, thy church, thy garden now
Blooms beneath the heavenly shower;
Sinners feel, and melt, and bow:
Mild, yet mighty, is thy power."

Just such a blessing as this had been the subject of constant prayer with Mr. Morse, yet now that it came, he was not permitted to mingle in the scenes which would have given him the purest joy; he was withdrawn by sickness. But there was one petition ever on his lips, not only through the day, but during the solitude and suffering of the midnight, "Father, glorify thy name." As the good work advanced, he was exceedingly interested in reports of it, and many of his wakeful hours were spent in pleading for Zion. Often would he repeat that hymn of Dwight,

"I love thy kingdom, Lord."

And add, with emphasis, "Yes, I do, I do love Christ's kingdom, and rejoice in her prosperity." With deep feeling he would repeat the third verse:

"For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend;
To her my cares and toils be given
Till toils and cares shall end."

That his own little church, for which he had labored and prayed so constantly, the church of his warmest affection, was also enjoying a Pentecostal blessing, was to him a peculiar cause of gratitude.

He would, at times, seem to forget his sufferings, and his whole heart be filled with the contemplation of the enlargement of Zion, and when visited by Christian friends, who inquired for his

health, he would briefly answer their questions, and immediately say, "Now talk to me about the revival, the meetings, and what new efforts are being made to help on this glorious cause, for this is all my comfort now." He remarked, on one occasion, "I do rejoice in this work, though God does not honor me by permitting me to labor in it; but I can stand still and see his salvation." Some one said to him one day, "Oh, brother Morse, how much we want *you* now. We want you in the chapel, we need your instructions, your counsels, your prayers. You know so well how to converse with the young convert, and guide the inquirer, that it seems as if we could not do without you." He listened to the speaker a moment, and then, with a solemn expression, interrupted him, exclaiming, "Not so, not so. God has nothing for *me* to do in

this revival. He is saying to me, *lie here and cough.*" At another time he said, "I can do nothing to help forward this glorious work but pray, and I do this constantly. I know 'they also serve who only stand and wait,' but it is easier and pleasanter to *do* the will of God than to *suffer* it."

He appeared to be in a waiting posture, anxious and hoping for a larger number of accessions to the fold of Christ. He inquired of a friend who visited him, if there had been any new conversions in the society to which she belonged, and being answered, *none*, he sighed, and replied, with great solemnity, "When will the children of God exercise full faith in the Divine promise? Jesus says, 'Ask and ye shall receive.' Do Christians believe? Do they believe? Why then does this glorious work seem to be at a stand still?"

After the first fruits of the harvest had been gathered into the Whitfield church, he said, "I should love to be once more permitted to go into that chapel, and listen to them while they tell what God has done for their souls, and give them a word of advice and caution." When asked what his advice would be, he said, "I would tell them that they must not feel that their work was all done, now they were united to the people of God; but just begun. I would tell them they had just put on the armor, and they must fight manfully for the Captain of their salvation, looking never for rest until he shall see fit to call them home."

At another time he said, "Oh, that I could be permitted to go once more to that chapel, and speak three words to those young converts." When asked what he would say, his reply was, "I

would say, enlist for life! enlist for life!"

He seemed to lose no opportunity during his sickness to speak a word for his Master, whether it was to those who ministered to him during the night watches, or to others, who visited him in his sick-chamber. To all, his testimony was clear and fervent. On one occasion he said, "I wish that I could make those who feel that a sick-bed is the favorable place for attending to the concerns of the soul, feel as I do, how mistaken and delusive is such an idea! Sure am I that if preparation for eternity had not been made until now, it must have been forever left undone. I cannot fix my mind, for any length of time, on any subject, and I am often so exhausted that I have hardly strength to pray. Like Whitfield, I can only wrap

myself around with Christ's righteousness, and so lay me down to sleep."

The spring of the year was a favorite season with him. His love of nature and refinement of taste made him keenly alive to all its fresh beauty; the springing grass, the opening bud, the melody of birds, the soft, genial air, were sources of great delight to him. As this season advanced, he was very anxious to go below, that he might once more look out upon the face of nature, and, although he was very feeble, it was thought best to gratify the desire. It was on a beautiful morning in May that the first effort was made. As he was led to the door, and looked around upon the garden and trees, which were just assuming their bright summer foliage, and listened to the birds warbling forth their notes of praise, his heart responded to the joyful scene, and, with emotions which

could hardly find utterance, he exclaimed, raising his hands, "I bless God for this, that I have once more been permitted to breathe his air, and gaze upon the work of his hands. This is indeed a beautiful world." Once, when a bunch of delicate blossoms was put into his hand at his request, he looked intently at them, and inhaled their fragrance; and when some one offered to remove them, he signified his wish to retain them, which he did nearly all day, as if he clung to them lovingly. Three times he was permitted the enjoyment of going from his room to look out on the fair face of nature, but the last time his strength had so failed that it was with extreme difficulty that he returned to his chamber, and he then said, "I shall never go below again."

He soon began to fail rapidly, and was confined most of the time to his bed,

but though "the outer man decayed, the inner man was renewed day by day." "His peace was as a river." For him "death had no sting;" and he often said, "the grave no terror." He longed to be gone, but would frequently remark, "I hope I shall be willing to wait the appointed hour." He took great pleasure in hearing select portions of Scripture, (especially the Psalms,) read to him, and accompanied by some favorite hymn. The sixty-third Psalm of Watts, commencing with

"Great God, indulge my humble claim,"

were frequently on his lips, and the last two lines of the second verse,

"And I am thine by tenderest ties,
Thy son, thy servant bought with blood,"

would be often repeated with deep emotion; and he would exclaim, again and

again, as if to himself, "Yes, yes, bought with blood."

A few days before his death, the 99th hymn of the selection appended to Watts' hymns, commencing,

"On wings of faith mount up my soul, and rise,"

was read to him; and when he heard the second stanza,

"No gnawing grief, no sad, heart-rending pain,
In that blest mansion, can admittance gain;
No sorrow there, no soul-tormenting fear,
For God's own hand shall wipe the falling tear,"

he exclaimed, "Can it be that 'God's own hand' will wipe away my tears? It seems too great an act of condescension. Oh, wonderful! wonderful! How glorious!" For some time he talked in this broken but rapturous strain, with his hands lifted towards heaven.

and his whole countenance beaming with the joy which seemed to fill his soul. After this, he requested to have the remaining lines read, saying, "I interrupted you, but I could not help it, it was so glorious." A young relative who was at that time staying with Mrs. Morse, said, in a letter to her, subsequently, "Hereafter, that beautiful hymn will have to me a sacred memory connected with it, which I can never lose; and whenever I hear it read, a vision will rise up of a wasted form, and a pale face glowing with heavenly light, caused by the inspiration of the words which seemed to fill his whole being with renewed faith, a faith, even then, almost lost in sight." "Those who listened to his words, as he lay on that death-bed, can never forget the earnest tones in which they were uttered, or the pleasant smile which accompanied

them; and they had greater weight and power, because all knew that they were only an outward expression of the spirit that was within. * * * Such a sickness as his is full of blessing, both to the sufferer and to those friends who gathered so lovingly around him, for it is a privilege to witness the triumphs of the soul over the pains of the body."

Mr. Morse had once said to a friend, "I do not desire riches or fame, and I think on the whole, (and I have thought it over a great deal,) that I can add my 'amen' to Agur's prayer. But there is one thing I do most intensely desire, and for which I most constantly pray; —it is, that I may have strength given me to walk through life, in every department of it, to go through the dark valley, let the struggle with the king of terrors be longer or shorter, and finally lie down in my silent grave

as a Christian, leaving *no dark spot* on my memory which would lead others to think lightly of a cause so dear to the Saviour." Was not his request granted?

A sister in the church called to see him, and he received her with a smile. "You can smile yet, brother Morse," said the lady. "And why should I not," he quickly replied, "with such a glorious prospect just before me." And then after speaking more fully of his views and feelings in regard to his approaching departure, he added, at the close of the interview, "Remember me to the old ladies;" (referring to two aged relatives in her family,) "tell them I am going to heaven a little in advance, and shall be there to meet and welcome them home."

One day, some one who visited him, was speaking of his untiring labors for the welfare of Zion, of his constant

attendance on the vestry meetings, and his efforts to render them interesting and profitable, and added that these reflections must be a source of comfort to him. Mr. Morse immediately replied, "Poor comfort this! I have not the least hope or dependence but in the atonement and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ," and quoted with much feeling,

> "Nothing in my hands I bring,
> Simply to thy cross I cling."

At another time he said, "What ground of dependence has any one who does not trust alone in Christ for salvation? Good works, I have none. Deeds of righteousness, none.

> 'Not a work that I can plead,
> Not a glimpse of hope for me,
> Only in Gethsemane.'"

His intimate friend, Mr. P——, whose

society was a great comfort to him at all times, and to whom reference has been previously made, was with him one day, when he said, "Brother P——, you come to me like an angel of mercy, to minister to my wants, and you are going with me down to the very entrance of the dark valley; but there you must leave me. But the valley is not dark, and it is all light beyond."

A few days before his death, his beloved pastor said to him, as he approached his bedside, "Well, brother Morse, you have got almost home." "I hope so," was the reply, "but I hope to be patient, and willing to wait all the days of my appointed time, till my change comes," and added,

"Oh, if my Lord would come and meet,
My soul would stretch her wings in haste,
Fly fearless through death's iron gate,
Nor feel the terrors as she passed!"

His pastor, with deep emotion, said, "Brother Morse, I don't know how to spare you, or how to do without you. I have ever looked to you for counsel and advice, always feeling that on your judgment I could safely rely." Much more was said from the fullness of a pastor's heart; Mr. Morse listened in silence, but before the interview closed, however, he manifested the leading feelings of his soul, by repeating the familiar lines of Watts—

> "But when his holiest works are done,
> His soul relies on grace alone.
> This is the man thy face shall see,
> And dwell forever, Lord, with thee."

His pastor once inquired, "Brother Morse, your state of mind during your sickness has been that of peace, quiet submission and trust, rather than rapture and joy, has it not?" He replied, "Such exercises as the latter would not

have been in keeping with my character and habits of mind."

Although as it regarded himself, he was so calm and resigned, yet there was one aspect of the case which called forth his deepest feelings. This was the approaching separation from his companion, to whom he was a most tender, devoted husband. Whenever he alluded to this subject, his feelings overcame him, and often bursting into tears, he would exclaim, "How can I leave you *alone* in this cold, unfeeling, and selfish world? Would it were the will of Heaven that we could take our flight together to that better land; then how joyfully could I go." "Do not weep so," he said to her one day, "our separation will not be long; you will soon join me again, and then—we shall part no more forever." At another time, he said, "God will comfort you, I know He

will. I leave you with him who has promised to be the widow's God." "Perhaps I may be permitted to come and be a ministering spirit to watch over you," he said to his wife. "Who knows but our little one and myself may be your guardian angels, and then you will not be lonely." He would often seem to lose sight of his own keen sufferings in his efforts to console and comfort her. Among other topics of consolation, he loved to think and speak of God's wisdom, and his overruling providence, often saying, "Remember, dear Lucy, that God makes no mistakes in the administration of his government," and quoting the lines—

"With patient steps, the path of duty run,
God nothing does, or suffers to be done
But we should do ourselves, did we but see
The end of all events as well as he."

A friend called on him, not long

before his death, and as she approached him, he looked up mournfully, and said, "Still, still in the furnace." His friend replied, "Brother Morse, the refiner always places his chosen ones in the furnace until all the dross is consumed, and the true gold appears; are you not willing to endure the trial?" He paused a moment, and then replied, "I am trying to have no will about it." Soon after, he exclaimed, "Can there be any gold found in me? Will there be any thing but dross?"

The last few days of his life, his strength had so far failed that it required a great effort to speak audibly; yet still to every one he had a word to say. A young relative from a distant city, called to see him, who had imbibed skeptical opinions. Mr. Morse, while in health, had often conversed faithfully with him, and he now exerted his little

remaining strength in attempting to give his dying testimony to the reality of religion, and the power of the gospel to sustain the soul in all its conflicts. He closed his solemn appeals by saying, "Will you not, dear E——, strive by repentance and faith in Christ, to meet me in heaven?" "I will try," was the answer. God grant that the promise then made to this dying friend, may not be forgotten.

As life drew toward its close, his sufferings were severe, but not a murmur or groan escaped his lips. To one who stood by him after a violent paroxysm of coughing, he quoted those lines which have been so often the testimony of departing Christians:

> "Jesus can make a dying bed
> Feel soft as downy pillows are."

The last particular conversation he had with any one was with his pastor,

the afternoon before his death. The last sands were running, the lamp of life was well nigh extinguished, and it was with much difficulty he could be heard to whisper: "Mr. Spalding, I wish to send my last dying message to the church. Tell them to labor for God, to labor till they die; it is the only thing worth living for."

About three o'clock the next morning, May 18, 1858, his mind began to wander. "The silver cord was loosed, the golden bowl broken, the pitcher was broken at the fountain, and the wheel broken at the cistern;" and in a few hours the faithful laborer, and the devoted Christian had gone home, to rest forever in that mansion prepared for those who love God.

THE END.

3 1205 02528 6558

FORNIA

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
B 000 019 486 0